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Fortune's Wheel

BY

MARTHA GRAY

"Memory, a pensive Ruth, went gleaning in the fields of childhood."

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TO SARA CHASE,
WHO FIRST ENCOURAGED ME TO WRITE,
AND TO MY HUSBAND WHO HAS BEEN A HELP TO ME
IN MY STUDIES, THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS DUTIFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

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FORTUNE'S WHEEL

CHAPTER I

THE BEAUTIFUL RIVER

DEAR READER.—Whoever you may be—I am writing this reminiscence of my childhood so you can see something of how life was before and during "the Great Rebellion," in the little village where my childhood was passed in that long ago.

My life began nearly a half century ago in the state of New York, in a village on the beautiful St. Lawrence river, a stream no one can appreciate by written descriptions. To understand its beauty fully, one must be carried along on its bosom, through its rapids, among its islands, into its smooth water, thence onward until the great ocean is reached.

Between Lake Ontario and Ogdensburgh are the Thousand Islands, one of the most beautiful places in all the world.

Little green islands rise out of the water and lift their heads toward the blue sky, as though trying to ask the "Great World" to stop for a while and tell them the mystery of the onward rushing waters, and why they are there, hundreds and hundreds of them.

But the "Great World" passes on, drinking in the loveliness of the beautiful islands, and never once stopping, to whisper, to them, that ages and ages ago, oh, ever so many that no one knows how long it was, the continent of North America was not a bit as it is now, and the waters rested in other places or rushed and babbled over other river beds.

Then there came a change; and nature wore such a strange garb her old friends would never have known her. Many other changes came; but we do not know how or when, the change was so mysterious, and the time so long ago.

Geology teaches many things, but the mystery of our world is locked so securely in the bosom of old mother nature, that we shall never know it all.

If you look on the map you will find that the Great Lakes form a terrace, and that that grand cataract, Niagara Falls, is between two of them, and that the St. Lawrence river is the outlet of them all.

Well, away back ages and ages ago the water grew tired of being imprisoned on the high terrace and longed to return to the ocean, the home of all the waters; and it broke away from all restraint and rushed over the land anywhere and everywhere, in its mad race onward, digging out a channel for itself and where the rocks were too hard to be much affected by the onward rushing waters they were left; and the river dug deep its channel right by their side; and in time the rocks were covered with soil and verdure, and there were so many, they were called The Thousand Islands.

I wish I could describe them; but who was ever able to describe the most beautiful things in nature? No one, so I will not try to describe them; but will only tell a few things about those beautiful, wonderful islands lying like emeralds and moss agates on the bosom of the mighty river.

Some rise right up out of the water and form a cone, others are flat and lie low as though nestling for rest and shelter in the embrace of the onward rushing waters; some are covered with trees; others are only velvety and green; and on some are pretty dwelling-houses.

The Canadian shore has abrupt banks and one could see lovely homes peeping out from a wilderness of trees and shrubs, and, in some places there were steps leading down to the water, and a little wharf with a tiny skiff moored thereby, all suggested a life of peace, pleasure and plenty. The American side looked so far away as seen from the steamer and the dark waters rushing along; all form a picture in my memory never to be forgotten.

I am telling how it all looked to me years and years ago.

I know that many changes have come and on account of the extreme loveliness of the place there is a famous summer resort there now, and other child eyes are looking at a different dress which nature has been compelled to wear; for all over our broad domain, people are pressing onward, building up cities and resorts and places for rest and recreation, and in a few short years places are so changed, that in going

back to them we do not find the same place we left and there is something in our hearts that is akin to pain.

Between Ogdensburgh and the ocean are the rapids: three in number. In journeying down stream, the Lachine comes first. Here the waters rush along so swiftly that no steamer could ascend the river through them. But it is a pleasure never to be forgotten, to go down through them on a steamer, or small sailing craft, or better still, in a row boat; only one must have an experienced boatman to manage the boat.

I will describe the—"Rapid De Plaw"— a localism —for I lived by it for years and knew it well. The river was very wide at this point and unequally divided—by an island three miles long—into what were called the Little and Big rivers: the smaller one being on the American side. My father has told me that years before the smaller one was swifter in its race toward the ocean than the big one. But that was before my time and as I knew it it was a very placid stream.

When steamboats were invented and set afloat on our streams, they found one river that resisted their encroachments, and as they tried to steam up the rapids, the river seemed possessed with a very demon of fury and the boats were obliged to drop down stream. I remember a song my father used to sing of a boat whose boiler was blown up while trying to ascend the rapids.

Progressive man never rests, and when an obstacle comes in his way he will overcome it somehow. So

men set their wits to work to outwit the river and determined to dig canals around the rapids.

The first attempt at the Rapid "De Plaw," was begun on the American side, the river being smaller at that point. But it was a failure for the engineers did not get the locks large enough to allow boats to pass, and the British government seized the opportunity the failure afforded and set men to digging on the Canadian side; and in time, but before my time, a dam was built between the island and mainland on the American side, then a drawbridge higher up, and still another bridge below the dam, but not quite reaching the island, it stopped near the old locks that were a failure—but with the dam and drawbridge the island was pretty well connected to the mainland and the turbulent waters set to rest.

This island three miles long and from one and a half wide in the widest place to only a half mile wide at a point where the earth had been worn away and formed a bay, called Ogden's Bay—was owned by Isaac Ogden an English gentleman. In the center of the island was his residence built of stone and in the style of all English manor houses. The grounds were magnificent with beautiful lawns sloping down to the river's brink, there were beds of flowers and flowering shrubs and blossoming trees and for a back ground the primeval forest reaching to the river on the west; and such a river as it was.

Away up near the head of the island the water was as smooth as glass, and one looking at it would think no ripple could disturb its surface. But just below

and completely spanning the river from the island to the Canadian side were the boilers. We called them boilers because the water boiled and there seemed to be great caldrons below the surface heated by invisible fires; and the waters boiled and twisted about like a living thing in pain. Then it leaped into the air and tossed its spray in showers, as though in defiance of the chained demon below, who kept guard over the caldrons. Then the waters sped away down the river, leaping, tumbling, dashing and crashing, carrying everything on its bosom in a mad helter skelter, hurry skurry race toward the ocean. But below and miles down the river is the Long Sault, a rapids much more frightful than either of the two mentioned and the waters must be caught by another demon much more terrible than either of the two who keep guard over the Lachine and "De Plaw" rapids and the waters will be turned, and twisted, and tortured into agonies worse than before, then they will be released and glide peacefully on until they finally rest at home in the bosom of old ocean, the home of all the waters.

I will tell many more things about the beautiful river before finishing my reminiscence, for it played an important part in my young life. It was there a thing to delight in. Its beauty never palled, and though we were forbidden and forbidden, we sought its cool, rippling, murmuring water every time we could steal away and get there.

When they built the dam between the island and the mainland, they left an opening near the shore of the mainland and built a canal along the shore, this gave

the water an outlet through the canal and the dam was left perfectly dry and we could walk over to the island on it any time, and too, it furnished a shorter route, the drawbridge being higher up. We loved the dam much better than the bridge and never missed a chance to cross it, on our way to the island.

There was a large flouring mill at the head of the canal, and all along the canal and dam were mills, shops, factories and foundries.

We were acquainted with them all; for we visited them as often as we could get the chance to do so. They were such curious places we were never tired of them, and wandered through them at our own sweet will—when we could steal away from parental rule.

There never was another such child's paradise as the island. It lay there like an enchanted land, resting on the bosom of the beautiful river, a thing to allure, to charm, and to encourage disobedience in little children. For we could never resist it and went there every time wo got an opportunity. We even ran away to get there. There was a subtile something in the murmur of the rippling water lapping and caressing the shore; in the cool depths of the beautiful forest, in the orchards, barns, drives, and walks that drew us there as though a magnet were attracting us and we were helpless in its charm.

Oh, how many hours have I sat on the west bank of the beautiful island and watched the great ocean steamers, sailing vessels, and rafts of timber from the Canadian woods shoot the rapids, "De Plaw."

In life there are no such hours as come to childhood;

no charm like wandering on the banks of a mighty river, one of nature's mysteries.

Now if you will come with me we will cross the dam and visit the lovely island. First we must climb these stairs for there is no other way of getting to the top. I will let you walk on the upper side where the water is lapping the very planks on which we are stepping, but it cannot come over and you need not fear.

On the other side it is many feet to the water below and sometimes folks are afraid of falling, so just walk on the upper side and look up and not down.

This large mill is a woolen factory. In there, they are spinning and weaving cloth. If we go inside we will see a spinning jenny and great looms for weaving; but to-day we are going to the island and will not stop at any mill only the " Paper Mill; " we never miss that. It is so curious we cannot pass it by. A door opens off from the dam and in the first room is the great vat for soaking the rags and that queer revolving thing in the center is the mill which grinds them into pulp. How awful they look and how horrid they smell? Can they really make paper from such filthy looking things? Yes, we will go down these stairs and see the great machinery work and then we can see the paper coming out; and it is as white as snow. There are girls to take the sheets as they are lopped off by the great knives. If we go up several flights of stairs we will see other girls sorting rags and see all sorts of machinery running, for there is a flax mill in connection with this paper mill, though just what they do, I do

not know. It is the paper making that seems to interest children more than anything else. But we must hurry away from this place and go straight to the island.

Now we are in the center of it and right before us is the manor house looking very imposing. It is four stories high. We cannot enter for it is a sacred precinct only open to the privileged few. I have been in some of the rooms. Children seem to get in everywhere. One of the housekeepers was a widow and her children lived with us a short time, and once when they went to see their mother I went too and she took me to see some of the rooms and they were very lovely with their rich hangings of silk and tapestry.

There is an excellent driveway across the island and we may stop in the woods.

What is that little enclosure? It is a cemetery where this rich and exclusive family bury their dead, and that tall monument is in memory of one son whose body lies on a Southern battle field. He was a Rebel officer and fell with the lost cause. The cemetery is beautifully kept and the large pansies look like guardian spirits keeping watch over the sleeping ones below. We will not disturb even a petal for there is something very sacred about burial places and ruthless indeed would the hand be which could remove a flower planted there by loving hands.

To-day we will journey down the island to the foot one and a half miles away. But we will see so many things of interest on the way perhaps we will not mind if we do get weary.

In going through this large orchard we may gather some harvest apples to eat: for the Bible says the stranger may gather to eat.

It was a beautiful custom the Jews had in the olden time, the planting of orchards for the stranger.

Here we find acres and acres of flax growing. How pretty it looks with its little blue blossom looking right straight up to heaven as though thanking the All Father, for this life of beauty and usefulness.

That red brick building is a farm house. The island is divided into three farms, and here the dairy is kept. We will ask the good girl at the door for a drink of milk. How delicious it tastes, the cows get only tame-grass to eat and there is no taint of feed.

Here are shade trees and places inviting us to rest. Now the path runs right by the river brink but the water down there is dark and treacherous.

Let us strike straight across the field and follow the road down; now climb these bars and we are in an open field and just beyond, see that little house; a man by the name of Spurback lives there. He has one son, a tall, lanky, freckled-faced boy whose name is Emmanuel. When his mother took him to be christened, the good minister refused to perform the sacred rite unless she would change the name, which she refused to do. So the boy kept his name and went without the christening; that is how we children learned the meaning of the word Emmanuel, God with us.

Let us stand here at the foot of the island and look down stream. How far away the main land looks on

either side and what a different appearance the river has.

On the Canadian side a turbulent flood never resting; on the American side a placid stream inviting us to take a row on its bosom for it is at peace with all the world. Everywhere are small islands, the river is full of them and yes, I see a tiny boat wrestling with the turbulent flood. See it rise and fall on the swell of the waters; but it won't go down for my father is at the oars, and when he comes near we will signal him to take us in.

Up go the tiny hands waving aloft the little white winged flags and father sees us and is coming this way.

He helps us in, asks how we have spent the day, tells his little stock of news—for he has been to the other side—and rejoices with us for so much of life's blessings.

An hour's ride takes us to the little wharf where we moor our boat. We scamper out and father gathers up the oars and with them across one shoulder, we clinging to the other hand—we climb the hill home. We are never afraid to enter when we have hold of father's hand.

CHAPTER II

JOYS OF CHILDHOOD

I BELIEVE there was never a place in all the world that had more real good places for play than our village afforded. There was the island always, and then there was the river with its bridges, dam and canal. All along the dams were vats and flumes, mills and foundries. At some mills we played in the sawdust and at others simply watched the great machinery work. But the canal was a joy forever. There were sluices, flumes, mill races and waterfalls, for there was such a volume running in all the time, the canal was generally full and running over through the openings left for the purpose.

It was here we spent days and days never to be forgotten.

We built our tiny fleets and set them adrift in the eddies and watched their journey toward the ocean—which we had named the river. We waded and splashed water, we would get possession of some tiny boat, built by some large boy, who, like Peter the Great, aspired to ship building, said boat not large enough for one, but what cared we, the water was not deep right near the shore and if we tipped over a wetting did not matter much, so we kept near the shore and paddled about.

Sometimes these big boys would come upon us unawares and catch us with their boat, then we were scolded or "sassed," as the children called it. We were not afraid for Seth was generally with us and every boy in the village of his size paid him due respect. They could take their "old boat" right away and we could build a raft. I remember the raft wabbled about even worse than the boat and sometimes tipped up and let us in.

I suppose you think by this time that we had a very indulgent mother to let us come home in such sorry bedraggled plight. But we did not—she always scolded and generally gave us a more lasting impression with a strap which she had for the purpose. But she never sent us to bed without our supper as some mothers used to do.

Her punishments did not cure us of going to the river, our passion for going there was greater than our fear of mother. We used to say on the way home, when we were sure what awaited us, "A lickin don't last long and to kill us she dasent," and the very next day found us again at the river; if we could get the chance.

There were three creeks called First, Second and Third creeks; the first one being about a half mile from the village and when we had been forbidden the river for a certain time, we would get off and go to the creek.

The Catholic cemetery was on one side and the Protestant one on the other side, but higher up the creek. These cemeteries were a great trial to us and

we regretted that our forefathers chose such a lovely spot to bury their dead; for next to the beautiful river this creek was the most charming place in our young world. The banks were abrupt and all along were springs with tiny rivulets trickling down and, oh, the lovely flowers which grew along their banks—forget-me-nots, buttercups and violets of every wild kind.

In the summer the water was low, the bottom all rock and the creek full of fish. Bull Pouts, a funny looking fish with skin and no scales, perch and minnows are the ones I remember.

The boys caught fish. The girls waded and gathered flowers and we all sat on the mossy bank under the trees and told stories and watched the frogs play in the water.

We never went to this creek only in crowds for there were the two graveyards keeping guard on the hillside and only in numbers did we feel safe. We never entered the Catholic one, there was something so grewsome about it with its black crosses and unkept graves; but sometimes we would climb the hill, get under the fence and enter the Protestant one. It was set out quite thickly with pine trees and the wind stirred the needles just enough to keep up that peculiar moaning always to be heard among the pines.

I never hear the phrase soughing of the wind, but I think of that little grave yard far away where many of my forefathers are wrapped in their last slumber. But the worst thing about this cemetery was a vault, a great, black, awful thing. In the early time some of

these Ogdens had had it built to put their dead ones in, but it had not been opened for years. It was built of stone and was moss-grown and weather stained, the most grewsome thing that had ever crossed my young life. A place on top of the ground to put dead ones in; why not let them sleep in their natural place, the bosom of dear, old, mother earth? In my childhood I was very much afraid of the old vault. There were steps leading down to an iron door. Around the steps, was an iron railing with a tiny door-like gate; both door and gate had great padlocks—and all were black and rusty.

The vault was about eight feet above the ground and the top covered with earth, grass, shrubs and flowers, but they were flowers born to blush—if not unseen—they were surely unsought, for I do not believe one of us would have gone up to gather them for a king's ransom. We used to say—"if we should go up to gather the flowers and the old vault would cave in"—then the awfulness would come upon us of how we would feel imprisoned there for the shortest possible time and we left the rest unsaid and hurried away as though pursued by spirits.

Down the creek the sweet flags grew and the banks were fringed with willows. In the spring we dug sweet-flag and gathered sticks covered with pussy willows. Artichokes grew in the back end of every lot and in the spring we dug them to eat.

Each season had its joys. In winter we had the ice for months; and snow and drift had each a joy awaiting us. In summer we played ball, a different

game than I see now-a-days. We called it Long Dutch. This way of playing ball was better than one and two "old cats," for in Long Dutch every one could take a part.

Then we had marbles, jackstones, mumble peg, and kite flying. We walked on stilts, climbed trees, rolled hoops, and jumped the rope.

Our family vehicle was a big wheelbarrow and many a ride had we when father had leisure to trundle us about. When we would hear the thunder rolling and see the black clouds gathering we loved to get out the wheelbarrow, put up the wooden sides, get in and raise a big umbrella and then tell stories and riddles and repeat rhymes until the storm burst upon us, then scamper into the house.

When we played with other children, I do not remember going to their homes very many times. We usually got together out of doors and trooped off to some favorite resort and there spent the time allotted to play. There were sand hills and old ruined buildings where we spent many a happy hour.

The house where great-grandmother had lived—she was the second settler in the village—had been burnt years before; but the old ruin was there; for the walls had been built of stone and lime and the fire could not consume that and the walls were standing; and there was a magnificent view of the river from the old ruin, and then the lilacs and roses were running wild about the old place and the strawberries grew in abundance in the grass. So we were never tired of going out to that old ruin.

We would generally start out eight or ten of us and go right out to the old place and promise we would play there until time to return, then go straight home. But the river was so inviting and the temptation so great, we usually forgot our promise and wandered down to the edge, and finally wound up at the head of the canal. There was a bridge there, and this bridge ended at the door of a great flouring mill. Here we would stand and watch the water run into the canal; and what a dangerous place it was, there was no railing around the bridge and the water was so deep, it looked green and rushed in with a roar and splash and we could hear it rushing through to the wheel which turned the stones. If we had fallen in, nothing could have saved us—we would have been beyond the power and might of mortal man.

When we would grow tired of watching this, we had forgotten our promise, or, if not forgotten, had bolder grown, and went behind a foundry where there was a little fountain formed in some way, by a pipe being connected with the canal above, and by the time this had begun to stale we had lost all thought of the promise and took off our shoes and stockings and played along down the canal, wading across the mill races, hurrying by the little waterfalls and ending in getting wet. Night would begin to settle down, and we with frocks and trowsers wet half way up, and shoes in hand, would climb the hill home; and take with what grace we could muster the consequences of our folly; and it was generally, a good strapping argument in favor of keeping away from the river.

And then we had the shop. In winter, father worked at his trade, that of cooper. He made barrels and tubs of many varieties and when he would get a good many made up, would hire a horse and sleigh and go among the farmers and exchange his barrels, butter firkins and tubs for their farm produce. Father was the kindest man in all the world and was never too busy to have us about him, so while he worked we played and were never in his way. There was a large old-fashioned chimney in the shop and we would pile the fire with shavings and other refuse from the work bench and do anything we wanted to. We kept store and trimmed the two little windows with all kinds of things called merchandise. Sometimes we were milliners and then the windows looked funny enough with their display of hats and bonnets in the very latest fashion; for no one had ever seen any thing like them before.

There was one thing in the old shop that fascinated me. I will try and describe it. Over the old chimney hung one picture. I do not know why it was there unless to keep before the minds of any men who might work there the thought that death was on their track and after that the judgment. The picture was a dual one. On one side was a man with horns and long tail and something of a spike in the end of it. He had a pitchfork in his hand and was surrounded by fire and smoke. His flesh was so thin, his ribs could be plainly seen and he had the most diabolical expression on his face I ever remember to have seen anywhere in all my life. A grinning, satisfied look as though some

one was suffering intense pain and he was rejoicing. On the other side was the face of a man with eyes meekly upturned toward heaven; there was a summer sky and white clouds floating overhead. An atmosphere of peace seemed to pervade this part of the picture, but no one ever explained the picture to me and it took me years and years to grasp its full significance.

The old shop was quite large and had three rooms. Two below and one overhead. We would mount the ladder leading up stairs and there find any amount of queer old-fashioned things which had come from, no one seemed to know where. Once a poor sick man with a wife and two little girls came to the village, and having no place to stay father let them in the back room of the old shop. Mother secured some work for the woman. She could make such pretty little bonnets called sunbonnets—and somehow the family seemed to belong to us. You see, we had done them a kindness and we loved them. My father and mother though poor were never too poor to help others.

And we had an uncle who owned a farm out from the village and we went there many times. There was a wood lot at the back end of the farm and we would go there to gather wintergreens and berries and spruce and tamarack gum. There was a little stream across this farm; just the place to wade and make mud pies.

My uncle's youngest children were all boys, but they were the very nicest boys to play with in all the world. I cannot recall to memory anything they ever did that was not kind and good.

When I went there to spend the day, they would play just like girls. We waded and made mud pies; went to the woods and gathered berries and gum; hunted eggs in the big barns; and when everything else failed, they put up a swing, and swung me, while I told them stories. I had such a good memory that any story I had heard or read I could repeat; not word for word but just in my own words. These boys living on the farm did not hear so many stories as I did, and I was always welcome.

My uncle had married a Catholic woman—her brother was a priest—and of course her family had to be Catholics too. Even my uncle was made into one, such is the influence wielded by women; and still in the face of this, many are clamoring for their rights. Why, a woman can do as she pleases with the sterner sex and the children are influenced by women more than all the other influence in the wide world.

This woman was good, and her influence good. My uncle was a successful man in his line, that of farmer. But their children did not have the advantage of books in their young days that children in other denominations got. Catholics as a rule do not let their children—and others older than children—read promiscuously, and when I went there I was warmly welcomed by these boys. Of course we had a very limited amount of books; but mother let us read all we could get and that was something, and we were very willing to impart the knowledge we got from them to our cousins who had no books.

My uncle would come into church on Sunday morn-

ing fasting, and as soon as the mass was ended he would come into our house and go into mother's cupboard and get "a bite" just to stay his stomach till he got home. His wife's piety was of a deeper sort and she fasted until she got home and got her dinner. Then when their dinner was over and the chores all done, and Sunday afternoon is a long afternoon any way—and they not having books it was rather lonesome and monotonous and my uncle would get out his fiddle and play for the children to dance. We were delighted to get the chance to go there on Sunday.

My father would not have had a fiddle in our house for any money. Why, next to cards, a fiddle was the greatest argument Satan had in winning souls.

Father would rather have had us kept away from them on Sunday, but it was mother's brother and she was the dominant factor in our family and we sometimes went.

Of course we thought these people queer in many ways. They did so much kneeling, and crossing, and praying, and ran to the priest for so many things we thought them out of joint with the world.

But somehow we got more real pleasure out of things which were, or seemed to be, out of joint and forbidden, than we ever could out of things allowed and allowable.

Human nature is much the same the world over.

CHAPTER III

MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

THE only thing I can remember about my grandmother is that her eyes were speckled, like a ground bird's egg. I had seen a little girl once, who had one blue eye and one black eye; but a woman who had two eyes alike, and those speckled, spotted, and mottled, were things to cause much wonderment in the mind of an observing child; and that is the reason why my grandmother's eyes and not my grandmother herself remains in my memory. It was a thing so unusual and out of the common, it made that deep and lasting impression on my young mind that all unusual things do on the plastic mind of youth.

But my great-grandmother lived with us six years and was called into the higher life the winter I was nine years' old. Great-grandmother had had several children, my mother's mother had been one, but she had departed this life and left her mother, as a legacy to us, the very best legacy we could have had.

I do not know why this arrangement was made. She had sons who were wealthy men, but she lived with us instead of them. She was the joy of our childhood. As I write I have a photograph of her before me taken from an old daguerreotype; but I remember the face well: large featured but such a

gentle expression that heaven's own peace seemed resting there; hair parted meekly, and combed smoothly over the temples; mild blue eyes, and a large mole on the side of her chin. Now moles are not a thing of beauty on a woman's face, but great-grandmother would not look natural even in a story without the mole. There is a snowy cap with full frills over the ears and a smooth space across the top of the head, a snowy kerchief across her bosom, a dress of some dark stuff and a string of gold beads completes the costume.

Dear old grandmother! She had learned in that long ago the things for which men are seeking still: that if you want peace you must carry it with you and if God is not in your heart He does not exist for you.

Peace was a constant guest in her bosom, and fell like a benediction on all who came into her presence.

I cannot remember her ever being fretful or disturbed and she had cause, for she was an invalid and lay in bed eleven years before hearing the summons—"It is enough; come up higher."

Mother's room was large and opened off the living room and grandmother's bed was on one side. At the foot was a bureau, at the head a stand and chair. Three times a day she sat in the chair and took her meals from the stand. These were the only times she ever sat up only on Sunday and then the wife of the Scotch tailor came in and gave her a bath and made her bed.

The bed was never made at any other time. I suppose she thought mother had enough work with her

numerous family, so she lay still and kept the covers straight, for the bed was always in order.

I used to watch the process of her bed making and knew everything which would be done.

The straw was thoroughly stirred in the under tick, the feather bed turned over and shaken up, the bolster beaten and put across the top or head, the clean sheets put in place, the quilts or covers put on, the pillows arranged just right, and grandmother, looking all white and clean would get in the middle, the quilts were turned back and the white sheet folded over and there she lay a very image of peace and gentleness.

As a little girl her name was Phebe Winchester. Her father was a paymaster in the Revolutionary war and she had seen General Washington many a time.

She was born and brought up in the shadow of Bunker Hill and had many interesting things to tell us of those stirring times when our forefather fought for liberty and against " the tax on tea."

She repeated the tale of the Boston Tea Party over and over again, and my mother's father was one of the men who, disguised as Indians, boarded those ships and emptied the contents of those tea chests into the sea thus immortalizing one tea party.

There was a picture in her room of the " Battle of Bunker Hill," and in the foreground the dying General Warren.

This picture kept the whole history fresh in her memory and to it we were indebted for many a tale told of the war.

She tried to explain to us the four great principles

embodying the declaration of Independence, and told how enthusiastic our forefathers were when that great instrument was signed; how the boy shouted "ring, ring," and the old bell man rang, as he had never rung before, and how at New York, the populace tore down the leaden statue of George Third, and cast it into bullets.

She explained treason and told of one man who was a patriot good and true, at one time, and how he betrayed his country, and became an exile from his native land and was despised by the people of the land of his adoption. Dear grandmother tried to explain to us that it was not so much for the love of gold that Arnold sold the country but rather for the deep love of revenge which has actuated many a man since mankind has lived in communities and practiced governing the people by a form called—government; and he, like many another, who has dug pitfalls for others, was the greatest sufferer in the end.

Jealousy and revenge have their part in the "Great Plan" too, and have helped to develop the human race. No American boy or girl can listen to the story of Arnold and his treason without feeling deep emotions of patriotism.

Grandmother knew more stories than any other member of our family, and why shouldn't she? She was the oldest member and had had more time to lay up a store. But her stories were innocent and full of interest and never made us afraid to go to bed in the dark.

I have always loved the twilight hour; because the

earliest recollections of my childhood, are of tales told to us in the twilight by this saintly old grandmother.

They say children love rhyme and rhythm, and remember better tales told that way. Well, grandmother taught that way, and though I am getting to be an old woman now, I remember them still.

Mother was always at work. She seemed to draw her life's nourishment from hard grinding toil, and when she had nothing else to do bound shoes. Shoes were made by hand in those days, and when you bought a pair they generally lasted a long time.

Mother never told stories, she had something else to do. So while she washed the dishes or did other duties around the house, we would gather around grandmother's bed in the twilight and she would begin. I will just repeat a few.

Entry, mentry, cutry, corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn,
Wire, brier, limber, lock,
Six geese in a flock,
Two flew east, and two flew west,
Two flew over the cuckoo's nest.
Dee, day, dine, time to go to dinner
Jack whipped John, blow the bellows,—
Little old man.
Rumble, rumble, in the pot, one, two, three, out goes—he!

This one we used to use when choosing up sides for a game of ball and the last "man" on whom the last word fell, by pointing to a child for each word

had the first choice of a "man," for even in those days some were better ball players than others and the winning side depended on the men chosen.

It was she, who taught us the story of the "House that Jack built." I do not know who the author was but she knew it in that long ago.

There was one story which could be spun out oh ever so long: the length depending entirely on the mood of the listeners or upon what mother was doing. I do not believe grandmother ever considered herself at all. It began this way:

As I was going over London bridge,
I found a penny and bought me a kid.
Kid wouldn't go.
See by the moonlight, 'tis most midnight,
Time kid and I were home an hour and a half ago.
I went a little further and found stick,
Stick wouldn't beat kid,
Kid wouldn't go.
See by the moonlight, 'tis most midnight,
Time kid and I were home an hour and a half ago.
I went a little further and found axe,
Axe wouldn't chop stick;
Stick wouldn't beat kid,
Kid wouldn't go.
See by the moonlight, 'tis most midnight,
Time kid and I were home an hour and a half ago.

If we were eager listeners, this tale would be spun out, an endless length; but if we could not stay, she would begin somewhere and tell how the water began to quench the fire.

The fire began to burn Bill,
Bill began to use axe,
Axe began to chop stick,
Stick began to beat kid,
Kid began to go,
See by the moonlight, 'tis most midnight,
And kid and I got home an hour and a half ago.

One story she used to tell was of an old woman who lived near a medical college and she kept a large flock of geese and the goose pasture was right by the college. Now these students once upon a time were making pills and for some reason they thought them a failure and tossed them over the fence into the goose pasture.

The geese seemed to think differently and soon had them all eaten up.

That night when the old woman went to drive them home, she found them lying on the ground dead.

She was very poor and these geese constituted her sole wealth and of course she keenly felt her loss. But being of a very economical turn she decided to save the feathers at least and soon had stripped them of all that were worth saving and tossed the geese in a pile to await the morning, then she would bury them. But in the morning she found them all waddling about, but in such a sorry plight.

You see the pills were not a failure after all. It was in the days when men were just beginning to find out that there were drugs in the world that could make living things like dead and they still be uninjured.

I do not remember how the geese came out but that flock never quite got out of my head, and every time I would see a flock of geese I would wonder how they would look with most of their feathers plucked off.

Grandmother was a communicant of the Episcopal church and whenever the communion was observed at the church, the minister and some of the leading members—among them some of these Ogdens—always came and administered the sacrament to her, and in leaving they would take her hand and many a time a bright gold coin was left in her palm.

I know she was never out of small coins, for whenever we would get too noisy for her she would tell us if we would sit still an hour by the clock she would give us a coin. I have sat and watched the hands on the old clock in the corner many an hour for the small wage of one copper. And such a funny old clock as it was! The face was away up to the ceiling and the weights when run down stood on the floor. When mother wound it she did it by pulling the weights down. There was a string and a weight on each end, and when one was up the other was down.

That is the way I earned my first copper by sitting still and watching the old clock.

Grandmother was noted for telling the truth and my mother in speaking of her would always say "Yes, grandmother never told a lie in her life."

Well if grandmother never did, she had one son whom we children accused of prevaricating. Uncle Hamilton, Ham, for short, went west in the early time—as far as Detroit. He grew up with the city—

as they say—and became wealthy. He used to come occasionally to see his mother; and once he told us, he had a trunk full of presents for us. He would perch us on his knee and describe the lovely things, dresses and everything little children could desire, even a large wax doll for each girl, and our little hearts leaped with excitement; and hope for the time to come when the big trunk would be set down at our gate. But baggage was slow in those days, very slow, so slow, that uncle Hamilton's visit ended before the trunk came and we never saw it.

Afterwards we thought he told us those things just to leave a good impression for the time being, and as early disappointments help us to bear later ones, we have forgiven him. Grandmother was taken with a pain in her ear and in three days it was all over. She had lived such a pure, simple life, close to the great heart of nature whose center and soul God is, that it was only a zephyr that stirred the current of her life, and like a leaf, she fell gently, and slept, on the bosom where she had leaned through a long and beautiful life. She was eighty-four when she passed to the other side.

Of all the pictures that hang on the walls of my childhood's memory, this one, next to my father's, seems fairest and best. I think of her in the twilight hour and sometimes feel that she now, a beautiful spirit, comes and stirs me to greater possibilities than I have ever known.

She was a help to me here, why not now that she has passed to the other side? I always have a feeling

that I am not quite alone at any time and that loved ones are watching me and when I am worthy help me.

Dear grandmother; her influence still lives, and her memory will always be a stimulus to greater and better action and purpose in life.

I was at my aunt's when she departed this life, but an uncle came for aunt and me. When we reached home I found her lying in the room where she had spent the last years of her life; but now so silent and still. The arrangements for the funeral were all completed and she lay in the coffin. I stood by her side and somehow death did not seem so terrible when I saw her wrapped in his silent embrace.

She was buried next day and aunt went home, but I did not go with her. I set up such a crying to stay home that my sister was sent in my place. There were things going on in our village that winter that were of more importance to me than anything else in all the world and aunt's household was so changed that I was very, very miserable there.

CHAPTER IV

FATHER'S PEOPLE

NEARLY all of father's people lived just across the beautiful river in Canada and we could see over there any time by turning our eyes westward.

His father and mother died before I was born and as a little girl, I used to be so glad to think that they were dead and I did not have to visit at their home; for they had always lived in a haunted house and I had heard father recite their strange and awful experiences, with spirits that walk at dead of night, so many times that I was filled with horror over their sad trials with these nocturnal visitants and was glad that they were dead and the old haunted house had fallen into decay.

But two sisters and one brother lived near the old homestead and then, there was a host of aunts, uncles and cousins, and we were always welcomed by them.

They were a kind-hearted lot of folks anyway, and though most of them were poor, they were good-natured and had the same kind look and smile to bestow on us that father always had.

One cousin, an elderly man, carried on a dual business for he was a ferryman and smuggler both. He ferried all classes of people across the beautiful river, but the principal thing which he smuggled was

whiskey. He had a tin can made to fit the size and shape of his form, and when it was filled with whiskey it was fastened to his body and then his clothes were put on over the can thus concealing his business; for no one would ever think, to see him walking along the street, that the principal part of his bulk was whiskey. But appearances then, as now, were often deceiving and many a man even now-a-days is composed of bulk not always true avoirdupois. Somehow it is a relief to me at this distance to remember this man as a member of father's family tree, for they were the most gentle, loving, kind-hearted, unsophisticated, docile lot of folks in all the world, and would sit for hours together saying nothing; but if you chanced to look at one of them, they smiled such a gentle, quiet smile as though they were satisfied with themselves and all the world. And what is a family good for any way with no black sheep to give a little color to the whole flock.

It is the bold adventurous spirits after all that keep the wheels of society from being clogged; and they certainly must have their place in the great plan, else the kind father over all would not let them prosper as they generally do.

This bold smuggler usually visited us after dark and always in company with some man whom he had ferried across the river to give an honest look to his business.

We children were never tired of hearing him relate hair-breadth escapes from the customs officer—the fury of the rapids was nothing compared to the danger

of being caught by the lonely man on shore who was looking after the interest of the government.

He alone was to be feared, though I remember his son, a lad of eighteen or twenty used to come to our house after dark and go with my brothers to Canada to purchase all sorts of clothing. Perhaps the customs officer did not know how law breaking his family were. We knew though we never dared to tell; for the principal part of our clothing came from Canada too; and came when the world was wrapped in a mantle that the eyes of even customs officers could not penetrate.

The dark mantle of the poor old world has covered many an act that would not bear the searching light of day.

Aunt Mehitable, father's eldest sister, lived on a farm twelve miles back from the river and it was a great treat to go there for there were so many things of interest on the big farm.

The family consisted of my aunt and uncle and seven sons, all in a row, and one daughter. Jacob the seventh son, had the healing power. They said he could heal any kind of disease just by laying his hand on the afflicted part. He was a very shy, bashful youth though, and could never be induced to try his healing power.

One old woman who had heard of his power had a big wen on her head that disfigured her and lessened her chances for making a second matrimonial venture, came to see him and coaxed and entreated him to heal her saying it would be almost no trouble to him to

lay his hand on the wen and spirit it away; but Jacob was inexorable and ran to the great barn and hid under the straw until she left the place.

My uncle was something of an invalid, one of the kind that can always eat but are never quite strong enough to work. He said he had done his part years ago while raising the boys and the time had come for him to rest and take it easy. So he sat around the kitchen stove day after day with his head tied up in a big red handkerchief. He never complained of pain but said the trouble seemed to be a sort of tired feeling that made him unfit for work.

I asked my aunt why she did not have Jacob lay his hand on the poor invalid and cure him; but she said they could never tell just where the trouble lay, so the poor invalid could not be healed.

There was another member in this family who did not work, the eldest son. Under British rule the eldest son is heir to the estate, and my uncle's eldest son and namesake sat around the house or walked about the estate looking after his interests with the eye of a bird of prey. Things were kept in their proper places and there was no waste going on either.

I suppose this man must have done plenty of hard work in his younger days for I have been told by my mother that this boy and my aunt did all the work years before, and that my uncle had always complained of that tired feeling which finally ended in complete invalidism, and thus he had worked on my aunt's sympathy, and she usually sent him to the house to rest while she and the boy did the work. Mother

has told me that years before when they first settled on the farm my aunt decided that the first old log-house would never last until they were grown rich enough to build a fine brick one such as I remember there—and knowing my uncle would never get rested enough to help build the new log one; she sent him on a visit to some relatives, and when he returned she and her family were all settled in the new house, my aunt planning everything and getting the work done herself.

So the time had come when the eldest son did not work either. But he was something of a philosopher and had learned many a lesson from life while jogging along. He had learned that a penny saved was worth two earned, and his wealth was increasing accordingly for there was an abundance of everything on the farm in the way of raw material. Great flocks of sheep, and endless quantities of wool—herds of cattle and horses, pigs large and small, and cackling hens and hissing geese gave evidence of abundant feathered tribes. There were acres of flax grown and rude home machinery converted it into cloth, a hatchel run by the younger boys beat the flax into tow and the flax wheels of which they had three, run by these same boys, spun it into thread and then my aunt converted it by means of a loom into cloth for the family use. The wool was made into cloth much the same, the carding and spinning all being done on the farm as well as the weaving.

It was a joy to visit them and watch the domestic machinery of this household run. Every one seemed to know just what to do and were cheerful in the doing.

After the day's work was done on the farm the boys in turn seated themselves at the flax wheels and spun a stint before retiring for the night. They could knit stockings and mittens as well as my aunt could, and were just as gentle about everything as she was too. These boys could not help being gentle, their father was too tired to ever display any spirit, and their mother—if she had possessed a lively spirit—never had any time to display it, and so they were brought up as gently as kittens in an old maid's house.

I used to look at these gentle folks and think if they had been endowed with as much spirit as we had inherited on one side of our family things would be very different.

But then, they had not been endowed and so they were gentle folks.

I said that there was an abundance of everything on the farm and so there was, but the maxim "a penny saved is worth two earned" was applied to everything. The garments were worn as long as they would hold together or there was enough of the original left to mend. Butter and cream were used sparingly on the table, and maple syrup when used at all was put on in a large saucer. I remember as a little girl I would look at the small quantity and think; our Seth could eat it all at one meal—yet it did for this family of ten and me a visitor too.

There were great cakes of maple sugar on a shelf in the large buttery, but they were never taken down and chopped into small pieces to eat from the hand.

When this sugar was made in the spring they usu-

ally sent us each a small cake called a "patty cake," and if we chanced to visit them during the summer we had to be content with looking at the big cakes on the buttery shelf.

My Aunt Mehitable was an original woman, and she and her family wore home-made clothing in every sense of the term, for the material was raised on the farm and made into clothes there too, and my aunt fashioned the garments after her own ideas of what garments should be for comfort and durability and they were marvels. I do not believe she ever saw, much less consulted a fashion book in all her life.

I remember some cloaks she and her daughter used to wear, they were made of some all wool goods spun and woven by her own hand and colored black by her own process too. These cloaks were long, coming to the bottom of their dresses and were just as full at the top as at the bottom. They were pleated at the top and sewed on to a band, then there was an extra little cape to hide the pleats—both the large and small capes were padded with wool to make them warm—then quilted to keep the wool in place. No doubt they were warm and comfortable but they looked funny enough.

My aunt had a hood to match her cloak made of the same material and padded and fixed in rolls, the front one rolled away from her face and stood up high and gave her a very striking appearance. A person interested in fashion would have to look twice before solving the mystery of her toilet.

We children were always glad to see her figure rise above the hill by the river when she came to visit

us. She was so gentle we loved to have her come. She always wore the same kind of garments, and they must have annoyed our mother for she used to always say when she would see aunt coming, "I should think Mehitable would buy a shawl and not wear that cloak handed down from the ark." But Aunt Mehitable had qualities of character that clothes could not hide.

When we visited there we were told all sorts of ghost-stories, for these people were very superstitious: one thing we were glad for was, that their house was not haunted and never had been. They had built it themselves and no crime had ever been committed in it. But there were haunted houses and witches all over the country and strange stories they told us of what witches could do. They could dry up the cows, cause the chimneys to smoke, make the water in the well salt, and even addle the eggs under the sitting hens just by willing these things done. A witch was all powerful. Every old hag in the neighborhood was treated kindly for fear of the mischief they might do if treated otherwise.

My uncle had had a strange experience once and that made him of some consequence in the neighborhood for he had one story to tell that never grew stale or old—ghost stories are always new. I suppose it is on account of the peculiar sensation with which they are always accompanied.

They had an ashery on the farm and the boys, when not engaged with other work, gathered ashes from all over the country, and put them in the leaches and ran

off the lye, and then boiled the lye down into potash and in this way gathered in a few dollars.

The eldest son had an eye for business, and sometimes when the hard part of the work was done and nothing remained to do but keep the fire and watch the pot boil—he would send the boys to work on the farm and set my uncle to watch the lye boil down.

Well, my uncle had his poor health and appetite too so he would take a bite to eat with him and some cold tea in an old tin teapot, just enough to stay his stomach and keep off that gnawing feeling—which was one of his ailments—while he worked at watching the fire and lye—this gnawing of the stomach always troubled him worse when he worked—he used to say.

One day while he was thus at work, and faithfully attending to the task, that little tin teapot walked off the bench by his side where he had set it to have it handy, and walking across the ashery mounted a ladder which led to a loft and stopped on a high round and tipped up and spilt the whole contents of the pot on the floor. My uncle declared that he was wide awake and that it was a warning that he would not live long. Of course he ran home as fast as his feeble health would permit and could never be induced to enter the ashery again.

I remember while I was there one spring there was a heavy rain and thaw which opened a little creek which flowed not many rods from their house, and when the frogs were thus released they set up that peculiar song of gladness they always sing at their deliverance in the spring, and when my aunt heard

them she ran and got her broom and opened the front door and began sweeping and repeated in a sort of incantation, Bedbugs and fleas do not bother me this whole year but go to my next door neighbor and bother them." I said what good will that do, are you troubled with such pests? and she replied, "No, I always do this and it keeps them away." I did not ask any more questions but wondered what would happen if the next door housewife should send her bedbugs and fleas to aunt—never once thinking that probably that was just what she was doing while my aunt sent hers there.

But for all their queer superstitious ways they were the kindest-hearted folks in all the world and we were delighted to get a chance to visit them.

Two members of this family were never married, the eldest son and the only daughter. She, a woman now long past the half century mark still keeps the house for the eldest son, a feeble old man. The world has changed and so have these people who are left. The last picture I saw of this cousin her dress was of brown silk and made quite in the fashion.

Father's other sister in Canada lived right by the canal and it was our delight when there to sit on the bank and watch the big ocean steamers and vessels going through on their way to the Great Lakes.

This sister was not a bit well off and during all my visits I cannot remember their ever having anything to eat but potatoes and fried meat—bread and butter and red beet-pickles. My uncle's father and mother lived with them and they had sugar for their tea though

no other member of the family ever got any, that was considered for their use; for the old grandmother kept the sugar in a small wooden box, and this box had a tight cover and at the table the box was kept in her lap, and when not in use the cover was kept shut tight so no child had a chance to smuggle a little to sweeten things. But what they had to eat never interfered with our going there to visit; for they were like father gentle, loving and kind, and always greeted us with a smile and continued to smile upon us while we remained.

To be sure they told hair-raising stories of ghostly experiences and the doings of witches, but then they never left us alone, some one kept right by us all the time and no ghost could hurt us, and we were polite to all the old women our cousins pointed out as witches.

It was here I learned that if a baby looked into a mirror before it was a year old it would not live to be a year old. When I got home I let our baby look in the glass and it lived to be many years old, that is how I found out about that. Then I learned if one spilt salt and did not run and put a pinch on the fire they would surely quarrel with some one, and if one was going from home on a visit and forgot something and returned for the same their luck would all be gone unless they sat down in a chair for a minute; and if a person came in one door and went out through another it brought visitors. Sticks floating in the tea brought beaux to see the young women, and a dish cloth dropped to the floor brought a slovenly person on a visit, and to pare the finger nails on Friday and not think of the red fox's tail was a sure cure for

headache, and if a woman looked in the mirror too long the evil one came and looked over her shoulder.

I remember I always hurried and combed my hair as quickly as possible after that for fear of seeing a diabolical face surmounted by horns peering at me over my shoulder. This one it seems to me might have a moral attached, for I believe many a poor unfortunate has come to grief by standing too long in front of a looking glass.

These people had a sign for everything, from sneezing before breakfast to the proper way of getting into bed at night. They planted and gathered in the moon and killed animals for meat in the moon too. But if they were superstitious they all had noble qualities of mind and heart, there was no scolding or whipping at this house, every one seemed contented and happy.

Father's brother had several children and they were poor enough, too; had none of the luxuries of life, scarcely the necessities, but they seemed happy and no unkind word marred the harmony of their household. I wondered as a child what made these homes so different from mine and thought my lot cast in a hard, thorny path, for mother had such a convincing way and domineered over us all.

I saw the day when I understood better and changed my mind.

These relatives on father's side lived always as I saw them in my childhood. They were gentle, kind and honest but had no ambition to struggle against fate and seemed to think that their path in life had

been carved out for them from before the foundation of the world, and it was their business to keep to the path in which God had set their feet. If He had intended any different, it would have been different from the beginning. This class of people are to be envied for they get more real solid comfort out of life than the aspiring ambitious ones do who know not what rest and contentment are.

When we went there to visit the large girls would do all kinds of things for our comfort or pleasure—make doll clothes—lie on the bed in the day time and tell stories—go walking on the bank of the canal or take the boat and row—in fact do anything to make our visit a delight; this was the reason we enjoyed getting over to Canada, everything was genial. Mother had a way of saying that father's people were not smart and did not know as much as her people did, but we children thought good better than smart, and some people whom we never dared mention knew a good many things which were no benefit to them. Of course we never told mother we suspicioned such a thing. One man with a quick, bright intellect and no education, and—who is consequently unbalanced—can do much more harm in the world than ten men such as father's relatives.

Mother had one brother who had been all the way from New York to California overland route. It took him four years to make the journey, and when he returned he only brought himself and his experiences, no gold nor treasure of any kind. He had a quick, bright intellect and could see through a joke with both

eyes shut, but he failed in getting an education in youth and lacked the balance a trained intellect gives to mankind. One never knew where to find him. He meant well; oh, yes, most people mean well no matter what their behavior and use this excuse to cover their misdemeanors. One day this man would sing and pray and even preach if the opportunity offered, and the next he was just as ready to fight if any one crossed him. Father's people never did things that way, whatever their mental capacity they were well balanced and if we could not expect any great rise we knew there would be little or no fall.

When we went to visit these people there was enjoyment in the preparation and going both; there were so many things to get ready. We always wore fresh clean clothes: mother would not let us appear unsightly objects among father's people. No matter how things might be at home, when we went there, we were clean and whole. And then the journey! Father would row us down to the foot of the island and we would walk across and stop at Mr. Spurback's and get a drink and rest a few minutes, then walk up the island fully a mile in the shady path right by the river brink. Father would pole the boat up—could not row it, the current was so strong—but by keeping right near the shore he could pole it up and by getting a start high up on the island would not fall so low down on the opposite side in crossing. When he would arrive at the tiny wharf we would be there and ready for the dangerous trip across. When all is ready we start, and father rows with all his might to keep up

as high as possible, but for all his strength and skill we find ourselves away down stream on the opposite side and must take another long walk while father draws the boat up stream with a stout rope, and when we arrive where our relatives live some one comes and rows us across the canal and we climb the hill and are there.

Oh that beautiful river! How many times I have crossed its restless tide in my father's boat and felt while crossing that there was nothing but water and sky in all the world; for the rushing waters boiled about us as though trying to engulf us and the sky smiled above us as though assuring us that a father's watchful eye was over all and no harm could come to us if we only trusted the two fathers, the earthly and the heavenly.

CHAPTER V

MY BROTHER SETH

THE members of our family were not of sufficient importance to write separately of each, but my narrative would be incomplete if I did not devote one chapter at least to my brother Seth, the black sheep in our flock.

We were a strange compound. On mother's side we inherited the hard, practical, sturdy, Puritan stock, and on father's side the gentle, loving, but credulous Dutch disposition, and both were uneducated. This made us a common lot of old-fashioned boys and girls, a mixture of good and bad, both struggling for the supremacy and coming out about even.

My brother Seth was an exception. He had only one element in his make up and that all mischief.

Looking back over it all through the dim distance of years, I think, he must have been the terror of the whole village. But to us, he was a brave, daring champion. Woe to the big boy who dared molest us when he was by! He could climb the tallest trees, swim and skate and do all manner of things that to us seemed wonderful. And there were plenty of things he could do that people in the village thought wonderful; though they would hardly come under the head of those mentioned. He was a disturbing ele-

ment, and no doubt had his mission in life just as other disturbers have. And as everything has its price he was paid in full for disturbing the peace of the community.

No matter what was done if Uncle William's boys were not at the bottom of it, then it surely was my brother Seth. That was his reputation. I do not suppose father and mother ever knew half of his mischievous acts, but for all that he was in disgrace nearly all the time. If mother had known all she could have kept him tied up to her bed post from week's end to week's end. As it was he was there a good share of the time. He did not seem to have any more regard for old than young, and played his pranks on old ladies as freely as on little girls or boys. He would go on dark nights with some other boys and stretch a clothes line across the street to trip up passers by; not knowing nor caring who they might be. The streets were not lighted and no one could catch them in the dark and he could come home looking as innocent as Noah in the ark, and if we waited for him to inform on himself we would have been waiting still for he never mentioned his pranks at home, and we, the rest of the children, never told on him as you will see farther on.

But our mother was a queer woman; she could see things done when we were a mile away and her terrible habit of asking questions brought some things to the surface that should have been kept out of sight and hearing. For when brought to light they disturbed the household and many times we were punished too for not coming home and telling on Seth

I wonder if the mothers of that day ever knew that their constant punishment for every little offence made their children untruthful.

It surely did, for the children are scarce who will tell the straight truth when they know the consequence to be a severe beating.

There was an old woman living quite near us who had a very large family and she never let the children come to the table to eat until they could earn their own living. She would seat them on the floor with their backs to the wall and give them a portion on a plate and they could not have any more. We knew this and disliked her, and Seth decided it would be serving her right to play a trick on her, and not wishing to be found out decided to do it on the night of All Hallowe'en.

He knew that a boy had more liberty when he acted on his own responsibility and so he seldom or never asked advice. Uncle William kept chickens of a very fine breed and felt proud of them as no man on our street could compete with him in such matters. His stock, whether beast or fowl, were sure to be the best.

Seth conceived the plan of stealing a hen from his roost and hanging it alive on the old woman's door. He did not count on the hen's behaving badly and probably never thought of the consequences. He intended to get the trick done so nicely that no one would ever find out who did it.

He waited until Uncle William and his family were all settled for the night—as he supposed—then stole

into the coop and got hold of a hen, but she set up such a squawking as was never heard from a hen before. He did not know what to do with her, and never once thought of letting her go now that he had her in his hand. So he started off with her she keeping up the squawking.

Uncle William had been expecting something on that night and was up waiting, and when he heard the hen he lighted his lantern and started for the coop, the thief ran and Uncle William after. When Seth saw that he was being followed he took out his knife and cut off the poor hen's head and thus put an end to her squawking but he still kept her in his hand.

The snow had come early that fall and the ground was covered with it and the poor hen's blood trickled down on the snow and mingled with his boot tracks. After a time finding that he was being followed he threw her down and took to his heels and ran and ran. He went to the drawbridge and crossed over to the island, came down and over the dam and finally got home in a very humble frame of mind, for he quietly went to bed without being told.

A half hour later Uncle William came in. He had picked up the hen and had her in one hand, the lighted lantern in the other, and on his face anger, defiance and revenge all mingled.

Seth's boots were meekly standing against the door leading into the chamber. He walked up to them and examined them, then said these are the boots I want, told his tale and mother called Seth to come down. Before they got through with him he confessed it all.

Of course they had no sympathy for the trick he was trying to play on the old woman. But their duty was plain and such terrible conduct could not go unpunished so he got a series of punishments. First he was made to get on his knees and beg Uncle William's pardon—then mother let Uncle William whip him—father was gone and if he had been there it would not have changed matters—then to punish him further mother cooked the hen and was going to make him eat it all. I suppose any hungry boy could have eaten a whole hen, but Seth decided he had suffered enough and early the next morning—without asking anyone's advice—started off alone and walked into a distant town where mother's sister lived just as the family were at dinner. He told them he had come on a visit and remained several days. But when aunt set him to splitting wood—a bit of work any boy despises—he thought he had visited long enough and the time was come to take his departure, and thinking a cane would be beneficial in the journey he took down aunt's broom and sawed off the handle, and finding it too short served the mop stick in the same way. Then went home flourishing the cane in the air as he entered the yard. He found the hen all eaten and gone, and his punishment being over for that offense, began looking up some other mischief. Our lot was a very large one and so situated that other lots joined us on three sides and in that day nearly every one had a few fruit trees growing in the back end of their lot.

There were strange customs too in regard to the fruit; for any branches leaning over on a neighbor's

lot became the neighbors so far as the fruit was concerned.

We had the largest apple orchard in the village, and to keep people out who sometimes help themselves to such things, father built a high fence around the entire orchard. It was the highest fence I ever saw and a person on the outside of it could not climb it at all. But we, the largest ones of us, could climb up to the top from the inside, and many a petty theft took place from the top of that high fence. Seth usually did the climbing and purloining, the rest encouraging him by our presence. He would take a long fish pole and fasten a hook—straightened out—on the end of it and spear apples from the neighbor's trees. He would draw the limbs of cherry trees to him, then strip them of their fruit for our benefit as well as his own.

Poor old Mr. Practon whose lot joined ours never got much good of his cherries that grew on our side, nor of his ripe currants. We did not mean to be bad, but ripe fruit was a great temptation in that day, and human nature the same the world over. Whoever saw a tree loaded with ripe cherries and not feel tempted to reach out the hand and gather some just because they do taste so delicious fresh from the tree.

We were not so much to blame about the currants for the bushes had been set along the fence and it only needed a very little coaxing to get the branches to hang through between the pickets of that high fence and when hanging on our side they were ours according to the custom.

We had one apple tree planted in a corner of our orchard, and the neighbor whose lot joined ours at that point had built a barn right in the corner so that tree when loaded with fruit hung on the roof of that barn.

It was a great trial to us children for it was a choice early variety. Grandfather had set the tree there in an early day, and it was large and bore abundantly. When harvest time came and we started in to gather those apples, and Seth would climb to the top of the tree and begin shaking the branches it always seemed that more apples went over the fence from the roof of that barn than fell on our side. And out would run those girls and gather them right before our eyes and we were helpless. There was the high fence, we on our side they and their share on the other.

But to recompense us in a measure they had two very large plum trees by our fence and though they could have used a stepladder and gathered their plums, Seth took a good deal of pains with those trees and saw that they never gathered any that grew on our side.

I have seen him on the top of that fence many a time taking plums and Miss Anna would open their back door and stand looking at him, he nothing daunted, returned the look and kept on taking what he considered his share.

In those days magazines were unknown among the common people; books were nearly as scarce and the few newspapers were of inferior quality and they not read by the masses, so the common or uneducated people got most of their themes for conversation from

current gossip, and everyone's business was known to his neighbors almost before it was known at home.

It was very amusing to note the different persons, the drift of their conversation and the queer things which interested them.

One old woman on our street was interested in boys and for some reason she was in trouble with some of them all the time. They played more pranks on her, and received in return more scoldings, than from any other person on the street.

She is seated by her fire on a cool evening in the autumn working away on a new pattern for a patch-work quilt—a sun-flower design—very puzzling to get just right and so she is very intent on her work, when all of a sudden her chimney does not draw, smoke begins to fill the room and the poor woman takes to sneezing.

She knows what is wrong. This is not the first time the thing has happened, and she is not a bit superstitious and knows right where to lay the cause. "Those boys again!" she cries, and goes into her little woodshed and gets out her ladder—she could not live without one—climbs to the top of her low roof and removes the plank from the top of the chimney, the boys somewhere close by in hiding enjoying the poor woman's discomfiture.

She always laid it to Seth, and nine times out of ten he was the guilty party, and if he told us we would not tell on him, for mother always whipped him and he said when she whipped one evil spirit out she whipped in two worse than the last, and we had heard

so much of spirits good and bad that we were afraid of them, and besides he was bad enough.

This old woman had a great black cat named Tommy. She prized him more than some persons do a more valuable possession. The boys had a special dislike to Tommy, for he was some like his mistress, very irritable and only a little teasing set him to spitting.

Well, one winter Tommy came up missing, and the woman accused the boys of making way with him. But for once they were not in fault, for when spring began to put in his appearance and wood began to run low in the little shed, there lay Tommy stark and stiff, crushed flat. He had gone under a pile to catch a mouse and the pile had settled and the poor cat had been put out of the way of teasing boys. He was brought out and we all took a farewell look at him before he was consigned to a grave in his mistress's garden. But few were the tears we shed because he was laid low.

Father always took the boys to prayer meeting. I do not know why he did it. They did not want to go and got very little if any benefit from going. But they had to go. That was a part of their education and bringing up. Most children in that day received a full and complete training in that line and we were no exception. Well one night when dear old Aunt Sally McDale was praying in her feeble, quavering voice and the prayer continued longer than usual, Seth reached over and touched her—not very gently—with a pin. The poor old lady was very much startled and

screamed aloud. My eldest brother was a very different boy from Seth, but this was more than he could stand and keep quiet, so he laughed outright.

I shall not stop to excuse or condemn, everything has its price.

Father got up from his knees and taking the boys with him went quietly out and home. He did not mention their conduct that night, but considered it and no doubt prayed over it during the night.

The next morning both boys were whipped, one for doing the mean trick and the other for his encouragement of wrong-doing by laughing.

My eldest brother never quite forgave father for this what he considered unjust punishment.

My eldest brother finally finished school. He could read, write and cipher some, and knew a little about geography, that was an easy branch to teach in the olden time, the question was there and so was the answer too, and stupid indeed was the boy or girl who could not learn when things were made so plain.

He knew all this so quit school forever and went to work in the paper mill.

Perhaps it was just as well. He did not live to see his twentieth birthday, and I have reason to believe the teaching is better on the other side and when I meet him he will tell me it was all for the best.

If I were making up a story I should leave out much that I have said, but as this is a true narrative I must continue and tell how Seth was cured of one habit he was getting into.

My eldest brother came in one day and going

straight to a shelf over the bed in the room where these two boys slept, took down some thread and three-cornered needles and bringing them out said to mother: "Seth came to the mill to-day and after he was gone we had occasion to use these articles and they were gone, and I knew pretty well where to find them."

You see, in those days, boys made all their own balls. They would ravel out old stockings and socks and wind them into a hard ball, then get an old boot-leg and make a cover and sew it on. There was a pattern for ball covers in every house where there were boys.

Seth saw those three-cornered needles and that stout thread, and knew they were just the things for ball making and took them.

Nothing came from this for the things were back in their place soon after being taken. But once he came near getting into jail, and that put an end to his thefts.

A large boy came to him one day and said a druggist there had sent him to Ogden's for bottles and asked Seth to go along.

In that day bottles were not so plentiful as now, and every one we could get was worth its price in coppers or candy, just which we pleased to take. They could always be sold.

The boy had a large bushel basket, and together they went to the great house in quest of bottles.

The steward said they had a great many waste bottles and the druggist could have them, and he filled their basket. But instead of going to the druggist, the boy stopped at the river and began cleaning the

bottles, and then told Seth it was one of his schemes to get a little pocket money. Those Ogdens did not want those bottles and they might as well have the money they would bring.

Isaac Ogden had a shrewd man at the head of affairs and he began thinking over the affair, and it ended in his driving over to see the druggist and then found out the fraud which had been committed. The boys were both arrested. Seth only escaped because he belonged to a respectable family and we were never known to do such things. The other boy was convicted and sent to Canton jail for six months.

This lesson cured him entirely and that was the end of his thefts.

I do not mean that that cured him of his mischief. That was born in him and was just as natural to him as breathing. No person, old or young, escaped him if he got a chance to play a prank on them.

He got into all sorts of rough and tumble fights, and once came home with his arm broken, but that only stopped him for a few days.

Once when mother sent him to the river to gather drift wood—that was one of the economical ways of thrifty housewives in that day—he went over to Canada and visited father's people several days, and when he returned he brought in a large armful of wood, hoping to propitiate mother. But mother's spirit was not easily propitiated, and that night when Seth had gone to bed and was sleeping the restful sleep of the innocent, mother went up with her strap and punished him severely.

But it did no good. His spirit was not to be broken that way, and all the whippings, only made him worse.

Sorrow would break his heart some day and lay his spirit low, and through the valley and shadow he would walk and reflect over the past and commune with God. Till then let us say good-bye to him, knowing that everything has its price and the day will surely come when all those who are in debt must come and pay what they owe.

CHAPTER VI

MY PLACES OF RESIDENCE

It seems to me, in looking back over my childhood, that some people, even in those days, had more children than they wanted or knew what to do with.

We, in our family, must have had more than we wanted, and the question of what to do with them was settled by sending some of us, in turns, to live with relatives, or friends, who had either none, or not enough, of their own.

Father had a sister living in a distant part of the state who had no children, but that did not lessen her ability to rear children for other folks. In fact, she knew better how to manage children—"other folks'"—than as though she had had a dozen of her own.

Her husband must have been a sort of "all round man," as we would say nowadays. He could turn his hand to almost any kind of work or business. In summer he was engaged in market gardening and poultry raising; kept bees and cows, and as the products of these various branches of agriculture had to be taken to market, there was a horse too. In winter, when nature took on her mantle of snow and slumbered for months in the embrace of the "Storm King," he busied himself with sawing lumber in his own little

old-fashioned mill; one of the long saw kind. The saw stood upright and was propelled by water power.

This style of mill, like many other primitive appliances beneficial to mankind in their day, has long since faded out of use in the more advanced parts of our broad domain.

Much to the delight of the girls in our family, a girl was of no use at all in this family. But a strong, sturdy boy, one who could nearly do a man's work during the day, and then run errands and do chores until dark night put an end to honest work, was just the thing wanted, so one of ours had to go. Of course it fell on Seth, the black sheep in our flock.

This was not the first time by any means that Seth had been sent to live with some family that wanted a sturdy boy, and, as in former experiences, he did not remain long.

The families who wanted him, always wanted him twice. First, they wanted him to come. Second, they wanted him to go home again; and, as second thought is sometimes final, he usually never returned when sent home as "not wanted."

They say one has to knock against the world in order to rub off the rough corners, but in the case of Seth, after his return we always felt—that the corners—instead of being rubbed off were sharpened considerably.

He must have made things lively for this childless man and woman, as well as for the other living things around the place; for when he came home he brought a letter, setting forth a long list of grievances; telling how he only half milked the cows, stirred up the bees,

treated the poor horse meanly, and when set to work in the mill, managed to get under the saw and was injured severely. There were three frightful gashes in his back, the scars of which he carried to his grave.

The letter ended by saying: if we had a different boy, a better boy, in our family he would be taken on trial, but Seth was not wanted any more.

Then our eldest brother was sent. They must have liked him better for he remained there a long time. One evening the following summer when we were all in for the night the door opened and in he walked, and walking across the living room entered the hall and sat down on the bottom stair step, and being overcome with emotion, burst into tears.

That bottom step might have been called the "place of tears," for it was there we always went to cry, and that step, if it could have talked, could have told many a tale confided to it, of hopes defeated; of plans laid low, or punishment borne, by strap or whip. And too some tears were shed there over departed loved ones, gone to the other side; where God "shall wipe away all tears." I am glad it says "all tears" for there are so many kinds.

My brother never went back. These people had never had any children, and consequently did not understand children, and their childhood had been but a poor, cramped thing at best, and that long, long ago, when child life must have been a struggle between hope and despair. Hope for the time to come when they would be emancipated from the iron hand that held them as in a vise, despair that physical development is

so slow, for to a child the years between five and fifteen are almost interminable.

My first experience with being sent away from home to live with other folks was when I was a very young child, so young I cannot remember much of the journey there. I know it was summer and we drove a horse and had some kind of wheeled vehicle. It was miles and miles down the St. Lawrence river and the family's name was Sutton.

This whole family run to single blessedness, none of them were ever married and there had not been a child in the family for years and years.

The eldest daughter was subject to fits and one was liable to come upon her in one any time. She had a ghastly look and I was afraid of her.

The next girl, about forty years old, had a peculiar way of winking. She would wink rapidly several times, then hold her eyes steady for a time, then wink rapidly again. I would watch her and wonder how she did it. Each member of this family had some peculiarity that annoyed me. I think I liked the mother best, a quiet little woman who spent most of her life in an unfinished chamber. There was a loom there and she spent her time and talent in weaving cloth of different designs. I would creep away from the rest and mount the stairs and sit by her side for hours, and watch the shuttle fly backward and forward. There were other weavers in the old unfinished chamber, weavers who spun their own thread as they needed it for use and hung their webs wherever they felt sure of securing a victim. I would watch these innocent vic-

tims struggling in the spider's web and feel sorry, for I had begun to think that I, too, was caught and would never get away.

The beautiful river was there but a few rods from the back door; but the water was swift and treacherous and I could not play in it. I would sit on the bank under an apple tree and watch the steamers going up and down and mourn because my home was on this stream and I so far away from it, so far away from all I loved in life. Oh, that unhappy time!

These people were building a barn that summer, and one of the men fell from the roof and was injured so severely that he lay unconscious in a darkened room, and they feared he would die.

Then the neighbors would drop in, in the evening, and they, the family, would tell how they had been expecting this calamity for they had had a warning, a light was seen by some member of the family, a light that gave warning of sorrow to come. And this loosened the tongues of the others and many a tale went the rounds of ghostly warning, of Jack-o-lanterns, and will-o-the-wisps and lights which burnt but never went out.

I worried all the time for fear the sick man would die, for well I knew that if he did die spirits would hold high carnival so long as the dead body lay in the house, and they were liable to return again and again, to haunt members of the family after the burial and I hoped and even prayed that the injured man would recover and to my great relief my prayer was answered. But during the whole time I was about as

miserable as a little highstrung, careless child could well be.

After what seemed months of sojourning with this family, there was one of those quarterly meetings, which the Methodists have always held, somewhere in a little church not far down the river. The family went and took me along, never once thinking that this very quarterly meeting would be the means of loosening the shackles which bound me a prisoner with them.

We went in and were seated near the front where we could hear what the minister said, and then it was considered more devout to be near the front, and we, being a very devout family—the girl who winked so strangely was sanctified—I have seen her on her knees for hours together in prayer—of course must be up near the front.

I have always possessed a goodly amount of female curiosity. It must have been developed very early in life, for at this tender age I was anxious to see what was going on around me. And too, as we had entered the church I had seen a little girl with bright black eyes and long ringlets, she was dressed in embroidered pantalets and petticoats, and on her head there was a hat with bugles dangling about with every move she made; but I had been hurried by as though the sight of so much finery would damage my soul's eternal welfare. I wanted to see her again and began looking around, and oh, joy never to be forgotten, there was my father sitting in a big square pew right by the pulpit. I nearly screamed aloud for he was looking at me with his dear kind smile just as I always re-

member him. The little girl vanished from my memory, the long night of waiting was drawing to a close and a beautiful light dawned on me.

When the meeting broke up he came and took me up in his arms and kissed me. I never let go of him but clung to his hand all day. That night we stayed somewhere and there was a long season of prayer, and when it was ended I was on my knees by father's chair fast asleep, still clinging to his hand. The next day he went home and I went too. I would not let him go without me.

I remember the journey home, the swiftly flowing river, the boat and father rowing, the little islands which we passed, and the sight of the dear village where was home and the children whom I loved.

It was late in the day when we touched at the little wharf and father helped me out, and together, hand in hand, we climbed the hill home. I always remember the days spent with father as days good to be remembered.

My mother's youngest sister was married to a minister many years her senior.

He had been married before and had several children. Two sons were older than the young wife whom he had chosen.

But my aunt was one of those determined characters one was apt to meet with forty years ago, and had the man been older and the family larger I think, judging from my experience with her—she would have undertaken the management of his household just the same.

She was a very determined woman. I suppose it

run in the family too, for our mother was very determined, and once her mind was made up there was no way of convincing her to the contrary, and my aunt not being responsible for what run in the blood, was very decided and determined. You see she could not help it, and the social condition was such at that time that people acted natural, and what they really were was evident to the eyes of beholders, even the eyes of small children.

Perhaps people did not have so many things to cover up in those days; anyway what one was inside showed itself plainly on the outside, too.

I understood my aunt's determined character for I lived there off and on for several years. I can just remember when she was married and the dress of bright Scotch plaid she wore still remains a fixture in my memory. Can remember very distinctly how she looked standing at his side, at one end of our parlor—the man so tall and she so little and young—he was forty-six and she seventeen years old. None but a very determined woman would ever have undertaken the management of this man and his five motherless children, three sons and two daughters.

But their domestic affairs did not remain long as they were, for soon after my aunt went there to manage a great change took place. She was not wholly to blame for it all, for the natural order of human events was at the bottom of some of it, though I think she hurried some of the events. The eldest son married; the youngest daughter died; and the eldest daughter was sent away to school.

The second son was a tall, slender youth, not very robust in health, and had the reputation of looking like his dead mother.

Perhaps this was the reason my aunt disliked him so; for she did dislike him, and all these things happening in the days when things were not covered up, her dislike was visible to any one living in the family; whether outsiders ever knew it I cannot tell, as no one ever confided such suspicion to me, a little child at that time.

The youngest son was my aunt's idol, the pride of her heart. He was a handsome youth, had deep blue eyes, dark curling hair, firm white flesh, and altogether was a decidedly fine looking lad, and my aunt loved him. He was never in the way and often went with her to church and other public places, and seemed like a devoted younger brother. I do not believe there were more than five years difference in their ages.

I have reason to remember both these young men for they were at home during a part of my sojourn in that household; for when a child came to live there and the eldest daughter was in school and the youngest dead, and no one could spare the time to tend the child I was sent there to "mind it."

At this time my aunt has been married some time, and I was eight years old.

Life is measured by experience, not by years; and I thought I was quite an aged person, for I was getting plenty of experience living in different families. Here in this household I was taught to work. I had never in my short life done anything but play, go to school

and live with other folks. I had not worked, I had just lived with them.

Now a new life opened before me. I was made to wash the dishes when I was so small that I had to have a stool to stand on beside the sink. I washed and prepared the vegetables, blacked stoves, dusted and made beds, and did all kinds of room work; run on errands and tended the child when my tasks were ended and not before.

My aunt knew every person in her village, and for miles around in the country too. Her husband's position opened a wide field for knowing people and she took advantage of it.

I was sent on errands everywhere. A minister's wife has more liberty than most women, and more persons respond to their solicitations. I do not know why. A minister who is paid for his services should not ask more, and beside there are so many in the world who need all that can be given. Perhaps the ministers do not know every "hook and crook" in their domestic affairs. I am sure that my uncle did not know that I was sent for milk and butter, fresh eggs and early vegetables among so many of his country parishioners. He was a large hearted man, generous to a fault, and his salary was sufficient for the wants of his family, and there was no need for aunt's bickerings.

But she was a determined woman, determined to do just as she pleased and she pleased to do many things which annoyed me, for I was the instrument in her hands for carrying out her plans. Seldom a day

passed, when the snow was off the ground, that I was not seen on the road trudging along with pail or basket in hand, bound on a begging expedition. This does not sound elegant, but it is true and many times truth has an ugly look.

Perhaps this is the reason I have had such an aversion to working in "Ladies' Aid" societies all my life—a year is the longest I ever worked in one and could never be induced to try again.

I did so much church work as a child I got a distaste for it.

My life at this place was not all shadow. Light played an important part too. There was a large river running through this town, but it was not the grand St. Lawrence and though I loved this it could never take the place of that. There were dams built across this river but the water rushed over them with a sullen roar, and we looked upon them as good places to keep away from.

We knew that once upon a time a boat with seven children in it had got adrift above the lower dam and was drawn into the current and carried over and the children were all drowned. This served to keep us away from above the dams. But below the water was shallow and the bottom all rock, and many an hour have I spent there. Some girl would come for me and if I had my work done aunt would let me go and to the river we usually went and waded and bathed and built forts out of the stones, for the water was full of them. We enjoyed these sports as only children of narrow resources knew how to enjoy. I have loved

the rippling murmur of running water all my life; for the first thirteen years of my life were spent where that sound was always to be heard in the summer time.

I went to school too, but not regularly. Went when my tasks were ended and not before.

But we always went to church and Sunday school. Being the minister's family it was important that we be present, and in our sweetest mood.

This was my first experience of living in a family where books played an important part. My aunt was not a woman of education though, and I often wonder now why this man chose her. She could not have been any help to him. But I suppose love blinded him as it has many another.

I cannot remember when I learned to read, I think I must have known how before I found this life, for books have always charmed me and since a little child I could read and understand books away beyond my years.

My uncle, a man of wide education, had a fine library, and I could read the books any time when my tasks were done. This was a great joy to me.

And then my uncle's family knew and visited the best families, and of course I knew them too, and often went with my aunt to take tea with some family of consequence.

There was a musical instrument—a melodeon—in the house too, and once when the eldest daughter was home on a visit she taught me to play a tune by note. The tune was Greenville and run this way mi, mi, ra, do, do, etc. I guess a good many beginners in music

have struggled with that tune. Thus lights began to play upon my life though it all seemed so dark to me a little child so far away from home.

A little circumstance happened at the breakfast table one morning that fixed the handsome young man in my memory, and though years and years have passed away I can recall his face any time.

I had been told all my life that little girls should be seen and not heard, but here the conviction was forced upon me that actions do speak and louder than words.

We had always had our syrup on the table in a bowl, and there had been a spoon to dip it with. But one morning aunt put it on in a small pitcher, and I reached over and took the pitcher and turned some of the syrup on my cake, and not knowing what to do with the drop that persisted in hanging to the pitcher, lifted it up and touched it with my tongue, and the drop disappeared. But looking across the table I saw a pair of deep blue eyes fastened on me, the whole face expressing astonishment, anger and disgust.

There was no word spoken but I used my knife after that to remove the drop, and learned that there was a power in silence greater than all the tongue lashings I could have had.

I usually stayed at aunt's about three months, then some one from home would come on a visit and I would set up such a crying to go home that I usually went, and my sister two years older would be sent in my place. When I would get home I would tell the stories I had read, and sing my tune, and was considered a very superior person.

CHAPTER VII

UNCLE WILLIAM

My Uncle William was a Scotchman, and so well represents a class of men who flourished fifty years ago that he deserves more than a passing notice.

He had married my mother's eldest sister, and must have liked the family he married into, for he lived on a lot so near the old homestead that only a wide lane separated them, and we children ran in and out of his house as freely as we did our own, and became about as well acquainted with Uncle William and his methods as we were with our own mother.

I can just remember my Aunt Martha, I was named for her and I suppose that is the reason I remember her at all.

There had been eight children in the family, but in the little grave yard where the pines keep vigil my aunt was sleeping, and beside her two children, Johnny aged nine years and Effie only three months old. When we went to the cemetery we always stopped at their little plot of ground to see the stones and read the inscriptions thereon.

On my aunt's were these words: "Sacred to the memory of Martha J., who departed this life May 28th, 18—, aged thirty-six years, seven months and eighteen days." There was a hand and the index finger point-

ing upward while underneath were these words "My home is yonder."

A little monument with a reclining lamb on top marked the other graves, these words were chiseled there: "He gathers them like lambs to His fold."

When my aunt departed this life, Mary, her eldest daughter, took up the burden of the household together with the care of a six-weeks' old baby girl; this was a heavy task for she was only fourteen years old. But young girls in those days were all taught to work and she had been no exception to the rule.

Six weeks later the baby followed the mother, and it was well for no little child can sleep so sweetly as beside its mother.

My aunt being dead the whole duty of rearing the children devolved on Uncle William, and he was equal to the task. His methods were so forcible that no child, large or small, could fail to understand them, and they always worked like a charm.

If you search for the quintessence of goodness or badness you will be sure to find it in small individuals. Nature has a way of making reparation, if she takes out of the physical she is sure to add to the spirit, and in Uncle William's case the spirit was equal to anything; for it was a giant imprisoned in a small form and always struggling to be liberated, and when the spirit gained the upper hand Uncle William was lost to sight and a very demon of fury seemed to be let loose in the neighborhood. He had a round bald head, steel blue eyes that seemed to look right through one, and a set determined expression on his face, that said

as plainly as words could that the heavens might fall, but he would never be turned from his purpose.

He had a short, broad nose that must have annoyed him, for there were two damp streaks on his upper lip nearly all the time, and he had acquired a peculiar way of snuffing. He seldom used a handkerchief, he said it was a senseless thing for a man to blow his nose in a cloth and snuffing was good enough for him; it might annoy some people but he did not care for that; what annoyed some people was a comfort to others, and he should keep right on snuffing.

I asked mother once what made Uncle William snuff his nose in that emphatic way, and she replied it is a sure sign of a smart man to have a troublesome nose, and from that on I looked upon him as a very clever man, for children usually believe what their mother says.

There must have been a great deal of good in him too, for with all his peculiarities—I will not say faults—his family were better fed, clothed and housed than nine-tenths of the people in the village. The yard was beautifully kept and there were quantities of flowers growing in his garden that were always tended by his own hand. But there were things going on in that yard sometimes that completely destroyed its beauty, things that disturbed the neighborhood and made us all think unkindly of the man whose spirit overmastered reason and good sense.

His youngest son, a tiny child, was very mischievous and often got into scrapes and came home with soiled and torn clothes or other evidences of fights he had

engaged in, and many a time have I seen Uncle William fall on him and kick him all over the yard, the other children never daring to say a word, but we would set up such a screaming it usually brought some of the women on the street to the rescue of the motherless child.

If Uncle William ever repented of these outbursts of temper no one knew it but himself and God, for he never mentioned his faults or failings.

Once this unfortunate little boy got possession of a fishing rod and line and went off with some boys to "First Creek" to fish. But while there they got into a fight, and during the fray his hook was, in some unaccountable way, drawn through his cheek so that the point and barb were drawn into his mouth and they could not remove it. This frightened them. Then they cut the line short and sent him home, and a sorry looking little boy he was. Tears had trickled down his cheeks plowing furrows through the dust, and the string hanging down and the hook fastened through his cheek all combined to make his appearance one of abject misery.

It was just at the supper hour—things went with clock-like precision in that household—and the family were gathering around the table when this sorry looking object entered the room.

If his mother had been living or the large boys a little larger, perhaps the rest of this story would not be written by me.

But he was only a little helpless boy in the hands of

a cruel, relentless father, and he was made to sit right down at the supper table.

The blessing was duly asked: Uncle William spread the bread with butter, as he always did for this child, then told him to eat.

Of course the pain was very great and the child excited and full of fear, knowing that when the supper ended he would be punished further and his tears began to flow.

We had seen him coming home and were there as soon as he was, and all stood round to see what would happen, and when the man was really going to make the child eat without removing the hook it was more than we could endure so we ran for the wife of the Scotch tailor.

Uncle William was not afraid of our mother, she could say enough but she was only a sister-in-law, but the other woman; he seemed to have some kind of fear of her—perhaps it was because she was Scotch and he understood the Scotch temperament—any way in a few minutes she entered the room. She was a large woman and could talk accordingly, and was not long in convincing Uncle William of the error of his ways and of the law for cruelty to children which she would employ if that child were not treated humanely immediately.

The child was taken from the table the hook removed, then he was bathed and put into his nightgown and put into bed, and he was not punished further either.

We must not let our sympathies run away with us in favor of this little boy for at times he was very naughty.

We had a baby brother still wearing dresses and petticoats, and sometimes when the gate would be left open by accident he would get out and run away, and every time this little boy found our baby away from home he would catch him and take off every garment he had on, then roll them into a bundle and put them in his hand and send him home; and such a funny looking little object he was running home as fast as his little legs would carry him.

We never complained to Uncle William, the poor child had such a hard time we would not add to it by complaining on him.

Uncle William was a devout church member, and he and his family were always in their place on Sunday morning in the little red brick church to which he belonged. In that church people were seated according to their piety, and Uncle William's seat was second from the front and ours third. This showed to the worshipper there, that Uncle William was a very little more devout man than our father, a thing we could not believe—we knew he was more to be feared but that he was better than father was a thing we could not believe.

We had one thing to comfort us, and that was that Aunt Sally McDale's seat joined ours, and she was a very sweet Christian woman, and what was good enough for her was for our father too. And the third

seat back was not so far away after all, and in those days there was not much looking around to see the new styles. The styles did not change often and when once acquainted with the members of any church one was sure to know the garments worn, for each had a first best and it lasted many years.

Uncle William was the class leader for years, and I seem to see him now going from one member to the other and asking them in turn to rise and testify as to what the Lord was doing for their soul; after the response he would give each in turn some word of encouragement or advice and so go the rounds.

There was a blessing asked at his table before each meal, and family prayer both morning and night, that over, he seemed to have done his entire religious duty to his family.

I cannot remember once in all my childhood a word of love or tender compassion between this man and his children.

Sunday was a strange day in that household. Uncle William was dressed in his best suit with a starched shirt and high collar and wide black cravat, but he never wore a long sanctimonious face. He could not have done it, if he had tried, for nature had fashioned him with a short round face, and he wore his beard shaved to the end of his chin and left a little rim of whiskers reaching from ear to ear. This gave him the appearance of having a round face accentuated, so his sanctimony could never get to the long-face kind.

But he would sit there among his children during

those dreary Sunday afternoons with that set determined look that must have nearly driven his children wild.

And those children, what days those must have been for them. No books to read, no pictures to look at, and nothing to do but wait until the day was done.

It was worse for those children than for Uncle Willliam, for they had inherited a double dose of spirit, and it was next to impossible for them to keep quiet.

Their mother had been our mother's sister, and they had inherited a lively spirit from her, for all of mother's people were of that strong-headed, determined sort that must have their way or die in the attempt, and no one could live under Uncle William's roof and not come under his domination, and those children being his children took after him—it was natural they could not help it—and they were spirited creatures. The neighborhood knew it if Uncle William did not, and when his back was turned and they were let loose every one on the street came in for a share of their practical jokes; though many times they went beyond jokes.

Sometimes they would get hold of some poor, innocent, half-developed country bumpkin from the back woods of Canada who had come over to the states in search of work, and woe betide the man! what little wits he had were soon gone.

I remember one fellow of this kind they got hold of one winter.

Uncle William was gone from home on some business, and it being a fine opportunity for fun they

could not resist it, and so they took the poor fellow in out of pure compassion for the night.

They sat around the fire and told ghost stories until the poor fellow was nearly frightened to death, then they put him up stairs to sleep in a room alone. During the story telling one of the boys went up and arranged the room.

He fastened a tiny bell under the bed having a long string attached to it; then hung up an old hoop skirt with a lighted lantern underneath and a dark skirt over all; this arrangement could be lowered or raised having a long string attached to it, and running through a hook overhead could be moved at the will of the person holding and using the string.

When all was ready they got him off to bed, the boys sleeping in a large room adjoining, and of course they left the door ajar.

Not long after the poor fellow had gone to bed he heard a strange noise and a dark object rose up and a light appeared. He was very much frightened and hid under the quilts. Then the bell began to tingle and the light seemed to dance, and this was more than the poor fellow could endure, and jumping out of bed he seized his clothes in his hand and rushed out of the house not stopping to dress and came to us for the night. It was a bitterly cold night and the poor fellow was nearly frozen.

The next day he left our village feeling that those boys were too much for him, and we saw him no more.

It was their especial delight to get hold of some

stray dog, coax him up, then fasten an old tin tea kettle to his tail and then go nearly wild with laughter to see the poor dog run, and they seldom got hold of the same one twice. Once coming in contact with them was enough for man or beast. They played all kind of pranks on us, and many a time if it had not been for Seth we would have suffered at their hands.

Seth was made of their kind of fibre and they usually handled him with gloves on.

One Sunday evening in winter when there was a fierce storm blowing Uncle William went to church alone, leaving the children at home to the tender mercies of their own inclination, and this time they inclined to make molasses candy.

No sooner was Uncle William's back turned than they got out the kettle and put the molasses on to boil, and when it was done they turned it on a platter to cool, but they hearing a step and fearing it might be their father hastily ran out the back door and set the platter in the snow just as he came in.

The storm was so fierce and there were but few out, and those mostly old ladies who would have trouble getting home in the drifts, they had decided to not have meeting and so he had come home.

They had a little dog named Fido. He was just the tiniest kind of a dog, not large enough for anything but to get into mischief. And when Uncle William went in Fido ran out and soon set up as big a howl as could come from such a small throat.

Of course Uncle William went to see what was the matter with the dog, for his cry was one of distress,

and found that he had run his nose into the hot candy and it was sticking fast, and he was howling accordingly.

The platter was brought in and the candy put into the stove; family prayers were attended to and then the children were sent to bed, no word being spoken about the candy. It was the holy Sabbath evening and no time to discuss unholy things.

The next morning after prayer the entire family were punished, and no one knew better how to whip than Uncle William.

You see those were the days when a little child's back might be broken, but the Sabbath could not be bent. I cannot remember the two girls in this family ever playing at all.

Mary, the eldest, took the mother's place and sat at the head of the table; poured the tea and dished the sauce just as the mother would have done. The other daughter helped about the house and went to school.

There was no house in that village better kept. Things were always in order.

The house was well furnished. I remember a cupboard where a tea set of pure old china was kept, a snowy cloth was always on the table and good things to eat.

The only skeleton at the feast was that grim, silent man. I never saw him smile. Perhaps he was mourning for his dead wife.

Uncle William's boys sowed their wild oats and played their pranks, then settled down into steady men, but not until after the Great Rebellion. When that

broke out and Uncle Sam needed young men, stout of heart and strong of limb, there were none better in the land to respond to the call.

They, if living, are elderly men now, but so far as I ever knew them they not one were ever connected with any church. They had had too much of the old time forcing children to church.

The eldest daughter, when her father needed her no more, married a rising minister, and I wish I could tell you that she lived to do much good in the life she had chosen, but real life does not always run that way. She lived just one brief year of unalloyed happiness, then after hours of suffering, such as women only know, she and her child slept the sleep that knows no waking.

Uncle William, if living, would be about ninety years old, and away back in his boyhood the training had been severe, and he being what he was brought up to be could not help acting out his nature.

No doubt he was conscientious and thought he was doing his Christian duty by his children.

The fault in our young day was we had inherited too much spirit, and there was little or no opportunity to work it off through a proper channel. If books and papers for children had been plentiful as they are nowadays our parents would not have had so much trouble with us.

The schools were poor, the text books inferior, and there was almost nothing for a child with a lively imagination to turn to but mischief.

If I were writing a story about the educated and

cultured classes I suppose my story would sound differently. But this is a simple tale of what happened among the uneducated and common work-a-day people in the village where my childhood was passed in that long ago.

It is a story full of light and shadow as all life must be whether high or low.

There were brave men and true in that class even if they were not educated. But education would have made them better as their posterity are testifying to. For what is the present generation? Just the children stepped into father's shoes, and having better advantage we will be called upon to give a better account one of these days.

CHAPTER VIII

CHURCHES

It is Sunday morning in our quiet village. The sun is shining overhead, the birds are singing gayly, the bees are gathering honey as usual, the river is moving on as though exulting in its freedom, and all nature rejoices. But we are up stairs lying in bed still. We do not care to rise until called this morning. There is nothing to get up for, so we think. We cannot do anything on this day, not even go outside the garden gate nor play at anything.

There are a lot of us and we are very restless. Oh, why can everything go on in a natural way, excepting the lives of little children. We look across at each other and occasionally a pillow is thrown, but even that must be done so carefully that no suspicion of it gets below stairs.

When mother calls we rise, dress and go down to find our breakfast of milk toast ready. After breakfast is over and the wife of the Scotch tailor has come in and bathed great-grandmother, I go in her room and watch the process of her bedmaking.

Some of the older girls help with the work. When that is finished our Sunday clothes are brought out and we are made ready for Sunday school and church.

Father belongs to the Methodist church and there

we have to go, and this Sunday school begins at nine o'clock.

It was an excellent arrangement for us for we did not like this church nor the Sunday school either, and as soon as the church services were over at twelve o'clock we ran right over to the Episcopal Sunday school which began at that hour.

We loved the Episcopal Sunday school, the church and people too. We did not mean to be naughty, we were only a lot of restless, high-spirited children, being brought up under the letter of the law with the spirit left out, and we were rebelling and trying to make things more comfortable for ourselves.

Little and undeveloped as we were, we thought each individual should have an equal chance in the pursuit of happiness.

When this Sunday school closed we went home to read and gloat over the books we had taken from that library. The Methodists had papers. The Episcopals had books.

Dinner came at two o'clock, and later the Presbyterians had their Sunday school and we could all go. Mother seemed to think that attendance at church or Sunday school was all that was required, and she being the dominant factor in our family, let us go.

Father would have preferred to have us in only one church and that the church of his choice. But he did not have his way in many things, and to her we were indebted for many pleasures through these churches.

At the Presbyterian Sunday school we each got another book and walked slowly home.

These books were, for the most part, small, and the stories inferior, but they were better than none at all, and by the time the week was ended we had managed to read them all.

The Methodist church to which my father belonged was a little red brick building and had no bell. But its members responded to the call of the Episcopal bell, which always rung out its cheery tones like a kindly summons to all.

The floor of this church was bare, the pews straight, stiff and uncushioned, and there were no little benches for comfort to kneel on.

The windows were of common clear glass and the sun shone in with a broad glare. The pulpit was so high up on one end, there had to be a flight of steps to get up into it. There were two great square pews near the pulpit: these were reserved for the most devout worshipers.

One of mother's brothers called them "the amen corners." I know there used to be much groaning heard in their vicinity during those long revivals and still longer "watch meetings." We used to think those would never end—the watch meetings.

I think all Methodist churches were built alike a half century ago. All I remember were the same. Everything was straight, stiff and uncomfortable. The flesh was made to be humbled and there was no need for anyone to go to church in one of that denomination, at least for the purpose of resting.

The preaching was not to our taste in that church

either. The sermon was always something about original sin, total depravity, sanctification or judgment after death, and we could not understand such things then, and could not understand why it was such a sin for a little child to enjoy life as the birds and animals did; and even the beautiful river seemed happy in its place and only people were wrong and must be punished.

This church never gave a picnic nor Sunday school party of any kind that I can recall to memory during the first ten years of my life, and we did not enjoy going there.

We thought there was nothing to be gained by going, no books, no pleasures at all and only a place where we were constantly told that all men and little children too, were sinners and on the highroad to death and judgment to come.

There was a tiny parsonage behind the church, built of the same red brick as the church, and sometimes queer people lived there, even if they were preachers and preachers' children.

I have heard some strange things about them, but will relate only one circumstance and drop them; for preachers are only men after all.

There was one minister in my young day whom I will call Brother Beebee. He had an invalid wife and no children—a very strange thing, for nearly all the ministers had more children than other folks did. Brother Beebee was a very plain man and always dressed in a stout suit of homespun. His hair and

beard were thickly sprinkled with grey and his whole appearance was that of a plain, common, unassuming man with no pride in him.

Dear sister, Aunt Sally McDale, said to father one day, when I was standing by, " Brother Beebee has not pride enough. I think he should dress better in the pulpit any way."

Father's reply silenced the argument, " Why Aunt Sally, pride is of the devil, now how much of the devil do you want in a Methodist preacher? " Aunt Sally stood rebuked in the presence of such a convincing point as that.

But a few weeks later the poor invalid wife passed on, leaving a great void in the life of Brother Beebee.

The congregation mourned with him, and fearing his robust health might give away under the strain, they persuaded him to take a vacation of a few weeks. When he returned to his devoted little flock his hair and beard were as black as a raven's wing, he was dressed in shining broadcloth, and his white shirt front stood out as though inviting criticism. Brother Beebee was a changed man from that on, and there were no more complaints that he did not dress well enough. In fact he dressed better than his circumstances and salary warranted.

Soon the little congregation were further shocked to see him drive out with a span of horses and a fashionable carriage, and before the poor invalid—who had left such a void in his life—had been gone a half year, he was inviting the young ladies of his congregation to drive with him. This was more than that church

could endure, and Brother Beebee was doomed to pass on too, and the next year a man with less levity was installed in his place.

A year later he was married to a young and pretty girl on the charge where he was sent, the people there not being so particular.

But the Episcopal church, how shall I describe it. I guess by doing as Dr. Crow did when he called the Episcopal church "a poem set to music," that describes that particular one very satisfactorily to me.

It was "a poem set to music." First there was a long lot enclosed by a neat fence having two gates. One could enter the lot close by the church door or have the pleasure of the long gravel walk by another street. The whole lot was set with trees, some of which were flowering trees, and in the spring we loved to enter by the long gravel walk under the sweet-scented locust.

The church was built of stone and even they were of such a color that there was an inviting look about them. The windows were of stained glass and the light fell through them softly like a benediction. The floor was carpeted with dark crimson carpet, and the pews were upholstered with red velvet and there were little benches to kneel on for comfort when in prayer. I do not see why one should feel like making themselves miserable and uncomfortable while asking a favor of "our Father in heaven," and besides it is more dignified to kneel up than down.

There were four chandeliers—to be sure they were only lighted by candles, but when they were all lighted

up and the light falling on the glass pendants they looked very lovely, and candles were the kind of lights people had forty years ago. And the whole end where the altar was, was all stained glass; there was a paschal lamb and cross and crown and other images gone from my memory now. There was an organ loft and choir —my first experience with music of any kind other than psalm singing was here in this church. There was a gallery on either side, and always at Christmas the church was beautifully trimmed with evergreen, and the great festoons along those galleries looked very pretty. Sometimes there would be a choir of boys, and they would be robed in white surplices, and they looked so angelic and their voices sounded so pure and sweet, and altogether, the whole of it—church, Sunday school and people were so lovable we could not help worshiping them.

Of course we were told over and over again that it was all the works of Satan, but somehow we loved the works of Satan when done as in this church.

Miss Fanny Ogden was my teacher, and she was so kind and seemed to understand that childhood was a time to rejoice in and did so many things to help make my life more beautiful, I could not help loving to go there.

Children love the place or thing that presents an attractive side.

Besides, this church every summer gave a picnic to Ogden's island, and they were the first ones to introduce that greatest of pleasure to childhood, a Christmas tree.

It must have been about this time that Prince Albert trimmed one for his children and thus set the fashion going in the world, and these dear Episcopal people not wishing to be outdone by even royalty, trimmed one for their Sunday school too.

I shall never forget my delight at the very first one. It was in a large hall and there was a supper too. After we were all ready the curtain was taken down and there stood the tree all ablaze with tiny candles of different colors. There was pop-corn hanging in festoons all over it, and a present and cornucopia of candy and nuts for each child. After the supper we were all taken home in the big sleigh. These were things to remember all one's life, too.

Perhaps you will understand why we loved to go to that church. It was there we got a taste for the good, the true, and the beautiful.

I cannot help what your training has been. God wants us all to be happy, and true happiness brings us closer to Him who is all good, all true, and all beautiful.

My father was a member of the Methodist church for more than fifty years, and for his dear sake I have always given it a warm place in my heart. I have not been in an Episcopal church since I was thirteen years old, but its influence in helping to mould my character will last through eternity.

The Presbyterian church was a large, plain building, but it had a kindly atmosphere and books for Sunday school children, and we loved to go there too. One thing I learned in this church that never left my memory—that is the map of India.

It seems that that church then as now was always getting up something both instructive and entertaining, and once a man who had been a missionary to India gave an illustrated lecture on his life and work there—the church was full for the lecture was free and the first thing shown was a map, and the man asked; "Did anyone know what that was a map of?"

There was a large red-headed boy there who had been attending an academy at Potsdam but was at home for the summer vacation, and he cried out Hindoostan! I looked at him and thought I had rather be that boy and know so much than to be a king on a throne. But that map never left my memory, and others have been added since but not in the same way that one was.

This church gave an excursion every summer too. A steamer would come and take us to some island away down the river, or to some place on the Canadian mainland, and all together we felt pretty well satisfied to belong to this Sunday school. You see we were a practical lot trying to get out of life all there was in it, and Sunday was such a long day in that long ago.

Then we had the Catholic church, the largest and best attended church in our village. It was the second building from our house.

But we never went there. We had seen Fox's Book of Martyrs and had heard a good deal of the doings of that church, ancient and modern, and had heard Maria Monks's tale of convent life—that story was common household property forty years ago—and knew so much—not knowing anything for sure, only

by hearsay—that we had no relish for going there, not to attend church anyway. We did not believe there was any good in it. It was all well enough to go around the yard on Monday morning or after a funeral and pick up any stray coins, shawl pins or anything which might have been lost by the crowds that came; but as for going there for any good, it was not to be thought of.

We changed our minds once and went out of love and respect for a person who will appear in his proper place.

There was one of the clearest toned bells on that church in the whole country, and it called people from all over the country to come, and they came. For these people turn out in greater numbers than in any other denomination I know. But such a funny looking lot as some of them were. There were Biddy Lebbins and her daughter Judy, and old Paddy must not be forgotten. Old Granny Pidgeon and her daughter Rilley. Patt and Sil Carr and a host such as these, and we grew to think that that was the beginning and ending of it.

We learned later in life to not judge any great movement by a few of its members.

On Sunday this church resembled a huge bee hive with hundreds going in and hundreds coming out, and still other hundreds going down a lane that ended near the back door of a tavern whose main attraction was a bar, and many a one on returning walked unsteady on his legs; and we thought that in all the world there was never another such awful church.

But we were learning things, and finally came where we knew there were things to be regretted in other denominations, too, and we found that life was only light and shade, and the brighter the light the darker the shadow could be.

If one has but little light, we must not expect too much of the shadow.

Some of the dearest friends I have ever had belonged to and believed in this church, and I long ago lost all my prejudice.

CHAPTER IX

SKETCHES OF THE NEIGHBORS

Of course we knew every person in our village; for our great-grandmother was the second settler in the village, and her children and children's children had the advantage of being among the oldest inhabitants and were accorded privileges the newer people did not enjoy.

We knew how much each was worth in this world's goods, which church each belonged to, and nearly everything pertaining to the personal worth of each too, and when the Great Rebellion broke out were not surprised that some who had never thought of such a thing before moved over into Canada and stayed there until it was all over.

In fact, we like many members of the great body social knew as much about our fellow citizens as we did about ourselves. We knew when Mariah Mott scuffed along in the grass at the side of the walk, that she did it to hide the hole in her shoe. No matter if she were the daughter of Dr. Mott, the dignified and exclusive, his dignity and exclusiveness had not brought him good financial returns and his family were poor. They carried their heads high, though they were

somewhat run down at the heels, and were bound to keep up appearances though they had to resort to all manner of devices to do it.

The Motts were not our neighbors, they lived several streets from us, but we knew them and their financial and social standing both.

Financially they were failures, socially they were successes, for the elder Miss Mott had a calling acquaintance at the manor on the island.

I do not care who you are nor where you live nor in what age, if you have a calling acquaintance with the richest person in your village, town or city, you are a social success.

Some things are not changed by time and usage.

Our nearest neighbors toward the river lived in a fine brick house and were people of consequence.

The only thing which made them our neighbors was that their lot joined ours. They never associated with us and would not have taken any interest in us at all only we children went there frequently to enter complaints against their youngest son. He was a slender lad of sixteen or thereabouts and was a noted character in the village, noted for being death on cats, and every child who had a cat or kitten that was greatly beloved had reason to remember this big boy.

I can almost see him now walking toward the center of their garden where he buried the cats, he holding one by the hind legs, the poor thing hanging head downwards and as dead as a door nail. He always took the whole nine lives right out of them with his method of taking off. When he killed our cats we

would run to the brick house and enter complaints against the boy, all to no purpose. They said they were not interested in cats and did not wish to be annoyed by such forlorn looking children as we were.

We grew to dislike the tall, dignified lady and thought she had no sympathy for dead things. We changed our minds before many years went by, when we saw this lady seeking the poor and lowly to sympathize with them over loss by death; for she had been stricken and her heart was broken.

The Scotch tailor lived just across the street in a tiny red house, about sixteen by twenty-four feet, covered the entire size. There was a long room, a tiny bedroom and pantry and stairway below and one room overhead where the children slept. There were four small windows in the house and a woodshed at the rear covered one, so of course, no light could come in through that one, and a person sitting in the living room had always an unpleasant recollection of that woodshed, where all sorts of odds and ends were thrown, for there were no curtains at any of the windows. Their only furniture in the living room was a cooking stove, a table to eat on, some wooden chairs and a cupboard, and a tiny table for the mother to sit by to sew. There was not an ornament of any kind around the house, and never a cloth on the table, and for food they had every day for six days in the week tea sweetened with muscovada sugar, and baker's bread and butter, nothing else, never at any time excepting Sunday, then the mother put over a pot and boiled vegetables and made a pudding.

L. of C.

Their Sunday dinners must have meant many things to those children.

The tailor and his wife never went to church though the children were sure to attend one or two churches and Sunday schools.

I did not understand the cause of their great poverty. The tailor worked in a shop on Front street, and the mother sewed every day and many times until late at night, for she was a tailoress.

She always had inflammation in her eyes and wore a green silk shade to keep the light from them.

These people were our neighbors in every sense of the term. They spent many an evening sitting around our fire. She sewing and listening while the tailor and father spun yarns. My mother used to say it was cheaper to sit by our fire and burn our candles than to do the same thing at home, and many a night the tailor would doze off to sleep and mother would creep off to bed and father would be obliged to sit there and feed the fire until the woman finished a certain stint.

Dear father, his was a kind heart, and though he too did not know how to make a fortune he knew how to make people happy, and he never missed an opportunity.

I have been told that the Scotch tailor and his wife died in the little red house where the children were born and grew up, and in fancy I can see them sitting by their lonely fireside waiting the last summons, he feeble, she both feeble and blind. Both clinging to the fond memories of younger years when childish

voices made merry the lowly home of this man and woman, who were poor in everything but human love.

Then we had a house adjoining the Scotch tailor's whose occupants changed every year, and sometimes many times during the year. People in those days seemed to enjoy moving too, and when they did not find the neighbors to their mind moved on and hunted up new ones.

The only things I remember of the people who lived in the old house are that they were poor and uneducated, illy fed and worse clothed, all seemed to have a hard time of it trying to keep soul and body together. But our next neighbor I remember distinctly. Time will not efface her from my memory.

She was the woman who could not get on with the boys.

She was tall and thin and had the queerest little yellow spots all over her face—not freckles—they looked as though a charge of bran had been blown into her face and remained there a permanent fixture, and it gave her a comical look. Her nose was long and thin, her teeth broken and discolored, she smoked a pipe and wore a cap with full frills over her ears, and altogether her appearance was enough to make any boy rebellious, and they could scarcely be blamed for playing tricks on her.

She lived in a tiny cottage having but two rooms, one above and one below, and there was a tiny woodshed at one end and this very woodshed helped the boys to play many a prank on her, for they could easily climb to the top of her low roof from that and

cover her chimney with a plank, or drop stones down, or even turn water down and put out her fire. In fact they did all kinds of things to worry and annoy her.

She could neither read nor write, but for all that she thought she knew more about law than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

She was engaged in laying it down to the boys so much that no wonder she was informed.

Poor thing, she had her heart trials too. Her husband was a drunkard and led her a sorry life. But then she was a shrew and he got many a hard scolding.

When the war broke out he was one of the first to enlist, and not long after his death was reported in the paper, and then we felt sorry for her for a time.

This gave her more liberty to discuss war news, and she did it with a vengeance.

I have seen her on the street after being to the post-office—the seat of information in that day—and getting her budget of news fairly bursting with intelligence.

Such a laughable figure as she was, high pitched voice rolling out the murdered king's English, arms swinging wildly about, and the whole body participating in the excitement which the great occasion warranted.

In this manner she would inform her neighbors of the defeat of the Rebels, or the victories of the Union soldiers. The boys would gather around to listen and form new plans to annoy her.

There was a tenement house on a lot adjoining ours and the people were queer, strange beings who lived there.

Of course in a sketch like this I could not describe them very minutely, and will only try to tell a little of the things which seem to have left the strongest impression on my young mind. One man by the name of Showen had three daughters and one son. The mother was dead and the eldest daughter kept the house.

We used to go there often for we could get right in at their back door by going a little way down our garden and climbing the fence, and when we were there could do much as we pleased, there was no Puritan spirit to convince us to the contrary. I only liked one girl, the rest seemed queer to me. I went there for the freedom the house afforded and to play with the girl I liked.

Submit was the name of the eldest, and Dulcia the name of the youngest. Submit and Dulcia, what soft sounding names.

I wonder if names do really influence children?

I have heard or read somewhere that one could tell what kind of a person one was just by hearing the name. Since I learned this, when I see the name Submit in a story I wonder did she drool or have fits, for I never saw but two Submits, and one drooled and the other had fits. I was afraid of the one that had fits, and shrank from the one that drooled. In this family the middle girl was named Jane, a good, sensible sounding name. I liked her but could never be induced to play with Dulcia, nor eat the food that Submit cooked, for these two girls drooled and I kept aloof from them.

The summer this family lived in the tenement a show came to our village, the first one I can remember so I must have been a very small child. The principal attraction was a man who had no arms but could write with his toes. When I was looking at the curious things the showman had gathered together to attract people, I wondered why he did not get these girls and exhibit them. They were more curious than anything he had in his display. They would get interested in looking at something and a vacant stare would come over their faces, their under jaws would drop, and the drool would begin to run, and I would move off. I have never in all my life met with another so curious a spectacle as they presented.

Another family who lived in the old tenement had fifteen children and none of them were ever allowed to eat at the table until they could earn their own living.

I have seen this family at meals very many times, the older ones who could earn their living eating with their father and mother, and the younger six or eight sitting on the floor in a row with their backs against the wall eating what had been given them, and they could not have any more either, consequently they were a thin and hungry looking lot. All had straight white hair, and such a woe begone expression, it fills my heart with pity now that such things have ever been and are still in the world, little children hungry for the bread that perisheth.

When the war broke out the father of this family and the eldest son went at the first call, and when I

think of the condition of society at that time, little or no chance for boys of poor parents to get an education, prices away down and work scarce, I do not wonder that when President Lincoln issued the call for seventy-five thousand that three hundred responded. The mother washed, scrubbed and pulled flax, in fact, did anything she could get to do to supply the needs of her numerous family, and many a time she came home drunk, and then the condition of these poor children was worse than usual.

The eldest girl went out to service, the others followed soon, and the younger children, as is the lot of all such children, suffered, and then, as now, there was no one to lift them up and out of their misery.

All these things made a deep impression on my young mind, and I disliked this class of parents and was sorry for the unfortunate children.

I was always asking these questions. Why are people different? What makes Miss Fanny Ogden so sweet and lovable, and some of the people with whom I am obliged to associate, so loud spoken, so coarse in manner, and altogether so unlovable?

Was it because the good God had made different kinds, and if He made different kinds why did he make them that way?

Why did He make me a poor, little, helpless girl, having no power to control my circumstances—long for the very highest the human is capable of, and still, hold me in those fetters. Since a small child I have had a restless feeling when in the company of inferior persons, and have looked up toward the good,

the true and the beautiful, and have longed with an intense yearning to be like the sweet, pure, gentle people whose influence touched my heart and set me to thinking of things away beyond my sphere and station in life.

Mother always said I was the most unsatisfactory child she had, for I was determined to be with superior persons whenever I could get with them. She told me I ought to be content with my station in life, humble though it were. I learned early in life how restless the aspiring soul could be.

Up the street a little way lived Biddy Martin, and her "new man," Jimmie Wilson.

Biddy had been married to Martin longer than to Wilson, and so she was called Martin. People could not get used to changing her name just because she had married another man, and then the children were Martin's, and it made it easier for us all to say Biddy Martin.

Biddy was an Irish woman and a Catholic, not one of the kind who wear their religion on Sunday and doff it on week days. Biddy's piety was of a deeper sort; and she wore her religion like a costly garment all the week, moving among her neighbors gently, like any good decent Christian should.

And I believe if it had not been for two elements which crept in on Biddy on Sunday, she would have been a good Christian on Sunday too.

But those two elements could not be kept out, so long as Catholics are compelled to attend mass, and men will sell whiskey; people must suffer, and these

two things were Biddy's undoing: company on Sunday and the whiskey they brought.

Every Sunday as sure as the day came, a load of her friends, or I might better say her acquaintances, not friends, would drive in from the country to attend mass, and they came fasting and thirsting too.

After mass they would go home with Biddy to get some dinner, and the men—as rum drinking a looking set as any one could find—always ran down the lane and in at the back end of a saloon, and soon returned tottering on their legs carrying the stone jug full of whiskey, and went right straight in at Biddy's door. Things would be quiet for a time, but as the drink began to take effect loud talking would be heard, soon cries of distress would mingle in, and before long a regular Irish fight would take place, and out into the yard the women would run flourishing broomsticks or anything they could get hold of, the men after them, and a regular melee followed.

Some of the men on the street—many times Uncle William—would interfere and get the noisy drinkers out of town.

Once they carried a man on a bed with a broken leg out with them.

Poor Biddy and her "man" Jimmie, it kept them pretty busy during the week to work out their penance and get their piety in shape for the next Sunday's ordeal. Adjoining the Catholic church yard was a rough-cast house having three rooms, two below and a low attic above, and here in this dreary abode lived three families, one room to each family.

Patt Carr and his family first, an old cobbler and his family second, and in the attic Lary Fay and his family third.

When I look back through the long years and recall these individuals Patt Carr comes first, and I recall a little story I read once of the experience of a census enumerator who called at an Irish woman's door and asked how many members her household numbered, and she replied promptly, "just me and Mike and the billy goat sir." Patt's family could have been summed up as easily, for there were just three in the family, Judy, Patt and their bull dog, and it would be hard to tell which individual was of the most importance.

As children, the bull dog claimed the most of our attention for he was a vicious looking brute. He and Patt were not a handsome pair and no one to blame either—a bull dog cannot help being a bull dog—it runs in the blood so as to speak, and they are seldom handsome creatures, more useful than ornamental.

Patt had a great deformity, too, and neither was he to blame. It was just one of nature's ways of disfiguring things, and in Patt's case nature took the form of a cancer and burrowed into Patt's nose until there was nothing left of it and then stopped. Not so with Patt, he continued to live right along and seemed to get a good deal of pleasure out of life, even if he were noseless.

The bull dog's nose was not much longer than Patt's, but his teeth were more suggestive.

How many times I have seen these two, sitting by

the door of their humble dwelling, Patt drawing away at an old clay pipe and puffing clouds of vile smoke in the air, the bull dog grinning at him just enough to show his teeth and the kind of metal that bull dogs are made of.

We children never loitered around Patt's corner when the dog was unchained.

Patt was harmless and so was Judy his wife, but that dog was one of the trials of our childhood, not that he ever hurt any one, he only looked as though he wanted to and we were careful to not excite his ire.

We knew very little of the cobbler. He had a large family and much poverty—worked early and late, but how they managed to live at all in such small quarters was a great mystery to us.

He was always sitting at his bench pegging away when not sewing, always trying to mend old things and make them as good as new.

I wonder how many pegs driven into the sole of an old shoe it takes to earn a dinner for ten.

I wish some of the men interested in the social problem would figure it out.

Up in the attic lived Lary Fay and his wife Mary. He tall, thin and stooped shouldered, bowed down by the weight of years, and toil and poverty. She young, rosy cheeked and buxom, clinging to this old relic of a long gone generation, and who should have been sleeping with his fathers, instead of helping a new generation into existence, for the young Fays flourished, and were, despite their poverty, as rosy cheeked

and healthy a looking lot as could be found in the village.

The family was great and so was the poverty. There was "a bit" of a stove to cook on, and "a bit" of a table to eat on, but never a chair to sit on, only stools and boxes, and then there was a bed which changed its appearance with the season. After harvest when straw could be begged from some Irish farmer, the bed looked like a small straw stack covered with a patch work quilt, but as the season waned the bed kept pace, and rose or fell with the season.

There were sure to be "praties" in the pot if nothing else, and salt has always been cheap thank God, and somehow these people managed to keep soul and body together. I have stood behind Mary's box when the family were at dinner and watched them eat. Lary would take a "pratie" and stand it up with one hand, and with his fist gently strike it down just flat enough to see the white inside bursting through the jacket which was never removed in the cooking. The best of the potato lies next to the skin, then he would sprinkle salt on and it was ready for eating; and not a plate on the table but one and that held the dinner consisting of nothing but potatoes for them all.

The family ate as did the head, that is the reason a family has a head so that there will be a governing power.

All these people, such as they were, were our neighbors, and I could go on indefinitely for there were plenty more like them, but this is enough to show

something of the old days, the good old days when peace and plenty abounded, the days for which many are sighing, but which we hope will never return. Let us look toward the new day and forget the old.

CHAPTER X

DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS

EMERSON says that "everything has a grace in the past, the river bank, the old house and even the foolish person," and to me this seems true. My childhood was so narrow and cramped that these details are all needed to fill out the picture.

I have written of the river bank where a child I played, and of the old house, the scene of my earliest joys and disciplines, and when I think of the persons—foolish and otherwise—who crossed and recrossed my life in that long ago, their figures come and go like moving objects in a kaleidoscope. Strange queer persons many of them were and left in my memory only a sense of something passing. A something that did not belong to me, only touched my life and set me to thinking. Why are people different? Do all these queer beings have a part in the great plan? Is God the common father of this medley of human life? And my heart answers, yes. In the great drama of life everything has its place. Everything has its opposite. For folly there is wisdom; for old age there is youth; for summer, winter, and for heaven an opposite just as sure as there is death after life.

In this picture of my childhood, there stands out in bold relief the figure of a tall, gaunt woman, with a

vacant look on her weather beaten face, and from whose eyes, piercing and wild, was gone the light of reason. Who she was or where she came from we never knew, but she made a tour of our village several times during each summer. She wore a costume of faded begrimed cotton which might have been white once but had lost all semblance to any color. There was an old sunbonnet tied at the back of her head instead of under her chin, her shoes were worn to tatters and fastened to her feet with rags, and she was adorned with bundles—bundles large and small. They were fastened to her person in every available place. Some were hanging from her neck, others from her shoulders and still others were attached to her waist and swung to and fro as she walked. Some were hanging from her arms and several small ones were tied together, those she carried in her hand. When people came to the village and brought no name we always named them. This woman we named Mary Bundle.

There was another one, an old woman who wore a very short and full dress, and such a broad-brimmed hat, it rested on her shoulders at the back. She carried a staff and looked like a pilgrim whose face was set toward the "holy city." She never looked around at any one but walked straight ahead with the stride of a soldier in the "King's regulars," whose legs were too short to keep step with a taller comrade. We named her Old Mountain Traveler.

There was Uncle Johnny Fulton who had been a child for years. He had thin red hair, watery blue eyes and a toothless smile with no mirth in it. A trifle

stooped in the shoulders, and altogether resembling "The Last Leaf" of Holmes to perfection. The summer he was ninety-six the children in the village all got the whooping cough, and Uncle Johnny took it too and was carried off. We missed him from our play ground for he was as interested and delighted at our games as any one of us could have been. There was not a boy in the village who enjoyed flying a kite or hoarding up old bits of twine and old knives more than he, and he never missed a chance to trade knives with a boy "no blade no trade," only Uncle Johnny usually came out from the trade with the best blade.

Then, there was Uncle Johnny Armstrong who always saluted us with "the top of the morning to ye," no matter what time in the day it was.

There was old Sil Carr who always cried out—when he heard a child crying in distress or pain—"the breed, the breed, the breed." Oh, how he annoyed us with his unfeeling words and laugh. And so they pass along, a motley throng, for in those days common men not having education, and there being nothing to stimulate the mental, became children again in every sense of the word.

The study of literature nourishes youth and stimulates old age, and they not having had nourishment in youth had no stimulant for old age, and when the mental spark went out it left only a feeble dilapidated physical.

There were some professional men worthy of notice too.

There was old Dr. Mott, a gentleman of the old

school, very quiet and dignified, and also very exclusive. He was a doctor of the old school and had his hobby and rode it hard. His hobby was bloodletting. He always advised it; for, he would say, when the system is clogged by a surplus of blood it prevents the organs from performing their proper functions, and in this way all disease is brought about. So to stop the progress of the disease he relieved his patient of his life's nourishment and the patient if strong enough survived, and if not took his place in the silent land and gave room to another, and the doctor passed on to the next.

Doctors practice bleeding still, but it is done differently now, and while the physical man is not injured it seems to have a very debilitating effect on the finances of the whole family.

Then we had Dr. Brigham, a little in advance of Mott; for he thought all the ills that flesh is heir to come directly from the stomach, and his patients were treated accordingly. He argued that if a man had a carbuncle it came from diseased stomach and he gave an emetic, or if it were a fever it came from the same source and he gave an emetic. If a man had a broken limb he gave an emetic to keep the stomach from digesting too much food, and thereby enriching the blood, which might cause fever to set in.

Well, Dr. Brigham had another idea quite in advance of some doctors of even our day. He thought a simple herb much better for the purpose than a liquid compounded by an apothecary, and he always carried with him for this purpose an herb called

"lobelia," one of the most forcible emetics known. After taking one dose many a poor creature has been cured of the worst case of hysteria. In fact it was a sure cure for nearly all the small ailments.

The people knew so much about the "Lobelia Cure" they frequently talked it over and made remarks quite detrimental to the doctor's dignity.

Sometimes when he would be riding along in his gig even the boys in the street would cry out "Lobelia, lobelia, lobelia."

There was such a funny story going the rounds of the youngsters that I will repeat it here. Boys in going to First Creek to fish had repeated the story of Dr. Brigham and his "Lobelia Cure" in the presence of a family of green frogs, who by the way must have been a very knowing lot if the story be true, and the frogs thought it so funny they had told it to all their acquaintances along the creek, and when Dr. Brigham would be driving along into the country to visit some sick person and drive over the bridge some big frog under the bridge would cry out "who goes there?" and a frog a little way down who could see the bridge would respond in a deep bass voice "Dr. Brigham," and a female treble higher up would cry "Lobelia, lobelia," and the whole chorus would join in and shout "Puke, puke, puke."

We children had heard this story over and over again, and knew not if it were true or otherwise. So one day when we were playing at the creek we saw a big green frog in the grass, and creeping upon him unawares caught him. He was very much surprised

at our boldness and kicked and wriggled to get away. But we held him fast and told him the story and asked him if it were true. Once he opened his mouth as though he were going to speak to us then closed it and looked at us and winked wickedly. When we could not get a word from him we decided that frogs could not talk and set him on a big flat rock. As soon as we let go of him he leaped off into the water and shouted back at us "puke." Then we were undecided whether frogs could talk or not, but learned later that the sound the frog emits is as near that word as any word one could think of.

Anyway we got a lot of fun out of the poor old doctor and his "Lobelia Cure."

There were two other doctors, but they were only common, ordinary ones, who occasionally made a correct diagnosis and applied the proper remedy, thus curing the patient. But many a time they were wrong and their patients passed on just as it has been from the beginning and will be to the end.

Hosea Fenton kept a little shop on a corner right where we always had to pass on our way to school. I suppose fifty dollars would have paid for the entire stock. It was just a tiny shop and had two small windows and a very high counter. I know our heads only came to the top, and we would have to look up to see Hosea on the other side.

He was a large man, and looked so big and red, and wore spectacles which were either hanging on or near the end of his nose, or shoved away back over his forehead. He wore a beaming smile, had kindly blue

eyes, and what hair he had—it was only a ring around his neck and over his ears—was red. His shining bald pate always recalled to us stories we had heard of Indians and their scalping proclivities, and we—of course, we were very small—would wonder if Hosea had lost his hair that way.

We knew that Uncle William was baldheaded, and knew too that he had never engaged in any Indian warfare for he was a Scotchman and came from away over the sea, but he was such a different man from Hosea, we hardly dared speculate on the cause of his baldness. We thought there was a true cause for it, for our mother had a small bald spot on the top of her head, and she had explained it so many times we thought every one who was bald must have had some kind of hair raising or pulling.

This is the way she got her bald spot. Her mother kept a large flock of geese, and one day when she was a small girl she was teasing them, and the gander flew at her and caught her by her hair and never let go till he had pulled out a lock, and someone ran to her rescue. The hair never grew in that spot again.

Well Hosea would spread out his wares in the most tempting fashion, and there was scarcely a child in the village who could resist them.

Perhaps I had been sitting an hour by the old clock and had my copper in my pocket, and feeling very grand and important too. Why shouldn't I? I had money and money brings power. Even in those days the boy or girl who had money and could buy

something sweet was in greater demand than one who had nothing of the sort. So I determine to keep my copper and use my power.

Hosea is standing in his door just like a big fat spider who has spread his web and is waiting for a victim. I have my hand in my pocket and clutch my copper very tightly, saying I shall not stop. But Hosea beams on me and says in his blandest tone "good morning, sis." I reply good morning Mr. Fenton and keep right on, but he does not intend any such thing.

Oh, we are in a hurry this morning I see! I reply stopping of course. Yes, I am going to do an errand before school this morning. Then he tells me he has on a new lot of candy, and it looks so lovely, and is so sweet, and the sticks are of unusual size this time, and won't I just stop and see it; it won't take much time, and it does not cost anything to look at good things. So it all ends in my going in and Hosea spreads out his wares and beams on me, and somehow the first thing I know my copper has found its way into Hosea's little till, and I with my candy go on my errand.

Between us, Hosea and the children, we were circulating mediums in every sense of the word, for nearly every copper we got found its way into circulation through Hosea's little shop.

Mr. Walters was the richest man in the village and lived in a fine, large stone house, whose front windows were always closed. They were very exclusive people and did not want their neighbors looking in, and be-

sides there is something so very impressive in a great house all shut out from the eager gaze of vulgar eyes.

I was never in the front part of the great house, but had some acquaintance with the back yard, for I went there many times during the summer selling my berries.

There was a high tight fence, no vulgar eyes could look over or through. Even the gate shut with a latch like a door, but inside the yard was very beautiful with flowers and shrubs and trees whose cool shade always tempted me to loiter, but the eye of the master said go and I usually went as noiselessly and quickly as possible if the master were about.

There was a piazza at the rear of the great house facing the garden, and here the family sat to enjoy the cool refreshing air of evening. And with their high tight fence and great house to enclose them they were just as shut out from the great world of common humanity as though that world did not exist. But there were things that could creep in, things that knew neither bolt nor bar. Stone house and high fence were no barrier. The common lot of humanity, pain and death could come to them and nothing could detain them when once they sought an entrance there. Mr. Walters had had three children, but his eldest son was dead. Died of a peculiar disease. The doctors called it lack of ambition, the common people said he was too lazy to live.

They had employed physicians of the different schools all to no purpose. Dr. Mott came and decided it was a surplus of blood which clogged the young

man's system, and he could relieve it quite easily with his lancet. But the young man was even worse and more languid than before, and kept his bed for weeks after the bleeding. Dr. Brigham's "Lobelia Cure" only served to quicken his pulses while the medicine was taking effect, and as soon as it wore off he relapsed into his old apathy. Then another physician was called in, one of the ordinary common ones. The father reasoned that sometimes honest worth and skill were overlooked in the presence of seemingly superior experimenters.

This doctor decided that driving would be beneficial, the young man would get the fresh air and sunshine and change of scenery, and it would set the life current flowing anew. But the poor young man had not life enough to drive a horse, and there had to be someone to handle the reins.

One day the physician thought of a new plan, and carried it out with the following results:

He invited the young man to drive with him into the country a distance of three miles, then getting him out of the vehicle drove off and left him standing in the road. It was the first time any one had ever taken any liberty with him, and he was stricken with dumb amazement.

Late in the day the father grew anxious—the young man not returning—and went in search of him and found him lying beside the road just where the doctor had left him. Somehow after that they gave up and knew that death had claimed him, and this rich and exclusive young man died before his twenty-first year

was completed, just because he had not enough spirit to rise above the indolence which he inherited with his fortune.

So one guest had entered that exclusive home and carried off the darling, the idol of the mother's heart, her first born son.

Their next son Tom had too much spirit. In fact if these two boys could have been divided up about equally their history even in this brief space would not be written by me.

But it was not to be that way. If one has spirit and money and leisure, the usual consequences follow, the money goes where the spirit takes it, and in this case the spirit was equal to anything. The boy just ran wild.

He played cards, a terrible crime in that day, took trips abroad that cost money, and finally got into the habit of letting in other spirits worse than the first, and was brought home nights in a condition which nearly broke his mother's heart.

Then they took council again, this time in regard to their youngest son's physical and financial condition, and decided the best thing for him would be to choose a wife and put an end to the sowing of "wild oats."

They were not long in finding a young lady who was willing to take Tom with the money.

There was a beautiful house built. I think it cost six thousand dollars, a large sum in that day. The grounds were lovely and everything seemed all a human heart could wish. But Tom had been born with too much spirit to endure the dull life which had

now been thrust upon him, and his spirit rebelled and sought other spirits which proved wicked spirits and they finally carried him off. Again this exclusive home had been invaded by an unbidden, unwelcome guest, and neither bolt nor bar could keep him out, and the father and mother were poor in spirit for their two sons were now gone. Even in my young girlhood the beautiful home was owned and occupied by strangers.

Then there was their daughter the youngest in the family. She had a finished education received in some young ladies' school in a distant city. She could draw and play the pianoforte and dance divinely, and she was very beautiful to look upon too. Her parents had had her complexion purified in New York City by some one especially fitted for the purpose. Her hair was dark, her eyes hazel, her form not tall and willowy, but formed like a Greek goddess, and altogether she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen.

I had heard so much of her great beauty that I was very anxious to see her. She had been away to school while I was too young to know and understand these things, but when I was getting larger and she home—and I going there to sell my berries—I would see her sitting there on the piazza with her parents. I have always had an eye for the beautiful, and could not help seeing and admiring her great beauty.

She was married to a young society man about the time I was thirteen years old and left there forever.

Years later being anxious to know how Arabella Walters was getting on, I wrote to my cousin and asked

for her. My cousin replied that Arabella's husband had turned out a profligate drunkard, and Arabella in a fit of jealous rage had shot and killed him. I never knew her fate. She was waiting trial in a distant city where the crime was committed.

And so they come and go,
These people who crossed my life in that long ago;
Not shadows grim and dark,
But objects real who felt life's pain and smart.

CHAPTER XI

SCHOOLS

I MUST have been a very small child when I began going to school, for I cannot remember of learning anything from a book at the first one.

It was what was called a Dame's school, and was kept by a woman named Mrs. Fenton, and in a room of her house.

There were two very small windows facing the north, and the light came in and cast a feeble, dull color on everything. There was a fire-place on the south side, and a long bench stood against the wall so high that our feet did not come anywhere near the floor, and a spinning wheel on the opposite side completed the entire furnishing of this my first school-room.

We were seated on the bench and given a lesson to learn—though what it was I cannot remember—then the Dame would go on with her spinning till we had the task completed. She did not teach her school, she kept it. That was much easier for her, and with her method just as well for the pupils.

The only thing I can remember of learning there was that I got very tired sitting on the high bench, and try as hard as I could my feet would not reach the floor.

At a given hour some one came and led me home.

I cannot remember when I learned to read. When I was ten year old I could read as fluently as I can now, and when I would stand up and read from my old National Reader and rattle off the words just as fast as I could pronounce them, some slow boy would whisper " I wish I could read like that," and I was a proud girl.

The principal things taught in my young day were reading and spelling. The words were not always pronounced correctly to the pupil though as many a one can testify to. I often hear persons say " that word was not pronounced so in my young day." The fault, nine times out of ten, was that the teacher did not know the correct pronunciation, and the pupils got the benefit of the teacher's ignorance.

When I was five years old I was promoted and sent to the old stone school house where all the large boys and girls went. I felt very proud of my elementary speller and little geography.

The speller was interesting on account of some stories—one about a milk-maid and another about some boys who were caught, by an old man, stealing apples. That man's anger always reminded us of Uncle William's outbursts of temper, and the story was so true and real we were glad to be the little girls reading instead of the two thieves up in the tree, and we really were sorry for the poor milk-maid to spill her milk and thus spoil all the pleasure she anticipated. This book was committed to memory, for it really constituted our whole world of literature at that time.

There were two rooms in the old stone school house,

and a master always taught in the upper room or the room where the largest boys and girls were.

The master's position was a dual one: that of teacher and flogger. He taught some and flogged a good deal. Nearly every boy was flogged sometime during each term, and some of them many times during each term. No day went by without a fight between the master and some boy, large or small. The master generally coming off victorious, for some parents whipped their children at home if they were whipped in school, and the master knew he had sympathizers.

There were other modes of punishment in those days, too—"a dunce block and fool's cap" were just as much a part of the teacher's outfit as a knowledge of the multiplication table, and when a boy or girl were unusually dull or mischievous, they were brought out before the whole school and stood on the dunce block and had the tall fool's cap put on—and there they stood, a laughing stock for the whole school—and the school took advantage of the situation by clapping, stamping, laughing and even cheering. If the child was sensitive, it was pitiful to see its misery. But many a boy laughed with the rest and seemed to enjoy it all.

The teachers had another way too, which was heart-breaking to nearly every spruce and tamarack loving gum chewer—there was such a quantity of those two kinds in the swamp near the village, and every winter father and the boys would gather a large quantity—others did the same—and when we would take a chew to school it nearly always found its way into the old

fire place. The teacher would see the jaws moving and come over and put the ferule right under the offending mouth, and that gum had to be put on the end of that ferule and the teacher walked over and tossed it into the fire. We usually disliked the teacher for that day, but children forget easily and by the next day the gum scene was acted right over.

The women teachers seldom tried to whip the large boys. It made a more lasting impression on the school to see the master thrashing them.

How many times have I seen the teacher write a little note and send it by some small boy or girl and immediately in would walk the master with the air of a destroying demon, and some poor culprit made to stand forth. The master usually left him whipped if not conquered.

There was a fire place in the old stone school house, consequently the pupils on the back seats got very little benefit from the warmth, and in order to keep up a good circulation they had to resort to other means " fair or foul," and they were generally " foul."

Many of their mischievous pranks were played on a poor unfortunate fellow named Patt Canada. Patt was what is called a plain looking person. He was tall, six feet I think, though when he stood by me in the spelling class he looked much taller. He had a round face and that soft flesh peculiar to freckled people, and his face, neck and hands were covered with yellow freckles. His eyes were light blue —very light—and no expression in them. His hair

was red and to complete the picture of facial beauty he had a large purple bunch on his temple, nearly as large as a hen's egg. Patt seldom stirred without a tag of some kind being attached to his person, with all sorts of things being written an printed on it. Sometimes a tag would be attached to his back telling any one seeing it to "show this boy the way home." "A little weak in the upper story," "head scholar," and everything they could conjure up to annoy this undeveloped youth.

Although he was jokingly called head scholar, he had few or no head marks and that was considered quite a disgrace in that day. When we spelled the whole school spelled at once, and all spelled the same lesson. We stood in a row on the floor, and sometimes the row was so long it reached across one side and up the end of the room. The head scholar would walk out calling number two, and two would take the place calling three, and so on until the whole school were out on the floor. Then the teacher would begin to "put out" the words, taking no notice whatever of misspelled ones. And if no one missed all went well. Perhaps the one next the head would miss and away down near the foot some scholar would take it up, spell the word correctly, and go up, the envy of the whole school.

There were rare opportunities in those days to get prizes for the one who had the most head marks at the end of the term got a card with "reward of merit" printed on it.

The old stone schoolhouse was pulled down and a

new red brick one built on the same site. There were two rooms below and the whole upper story was all in one room.

When school first opened in the new building I was in the intermediate department. I learned rapidly anything depending on memory, and "reading, writing and spelling" were the things taught, so I got on amazingly, and by the time I was ten years old was sent up stairs to school. Then I came under the master's eye.

My experience with the masters so far had been in the way of watching their fights with the boys, and their little love scenes with the teachers.

I recall one young man. He had a fat face covered with pimples. He would come down into Miss Ann Jones's room and sit on the corner of her little table and say sweet things to her at recess, we standing by wondering how she could endure him. I think she must have enjoyed his physical strength too—he was a young Hercules—for she sent for him very frequently to punish refractory boys.

Once when she had sent for the young master to come down and punish a big boy he ran to the door and tried to escape, but she called for help and several boys came and held the door for a minute only, for the master was right on the spot, and he and the boy had a rough and tumble fight, all the school looking on in breathless silence expecting some one to get hurt. We were not disappointed. The boy was punished severely.

My first experience with the master was anything

but pleasant. He was a married man and had children of his own and understood the nature of a child, and had his own original methods for treatment. He wore slippers in the school room and could run over the desks as nimbly as a cat and not make any more noise either. The first thing a mischievous boy or girl knew he was right there to see what was going on. I have seen this man stand in the middle of the room and throw his ferule clear across the room at some boy or girl, and every one in the vicinity of its passage through the air cringing low, none daring to flee.

But for all his vigilance there were many a grimace made at the back of his august person.

When he opened school in the morning he called the roll, and when some pupil failed to be present to respond some one present would cry "absent," perhaps another would repeat "absent," this irritated the master. He would look up and say sternly "no more of that," then many a time a big boy bolder than the rest would repeat, almost in the voice of a challenge "absent," then the master would rise quickly, rush over to the offender and jerk him out on to the floor. Perhaps the poor fellow would stand there the whole forenoon. It did not end this way always. Once the third responder was quite a young man, and when the master reached his seat he was standing ready for anything, and when the master tried to strike him they clinched, but the master soon released him and told him to leave school. He gathered up his books and walked to the door, and bowing gracefully to the school burst forth in a poetic flow of imagery,

Good-bye scholars,
Good-bye school,
Good-bye master,
You're a fool.

then closing the door ran hastily down stairs. His father was an influential man and he was soon in his old seat again. The next master was a married man too. He was a tall man with light blue eyes and red hair and whiskers.

I wonder if color makes or marks the individual. Patt Canada had this same coloring and he did not seem to have any temper at all, and when the boys teased him he would drop his under jaw and just look vacant. But this red-headed master was entirely different. Perhaps he had reached a higher degree of development and knew when he was imposed upon. And in that red brick school house in that long ago when the bent of common ordinary boys' minds run to mischief, that red-headed master met his match many a time.

This master was worse on discipline than the last had been, and kept from one to three standing on the floor all the time. Once he feruled two girls. They were playing some little puzzle on their slates and he caught them at it. He made them hold out their hands there over the desk, and every time he struck the quivering palm the back of the hand struck against the desk, and at recess their hands were all covered with great white blisters.

I never knew the parents to make complaints against these abuses.

Sometimes he would rush over to some boy, jerk him out of his seat, drag him on to the floor, and flog him unmercifully.

The young men would retaliate by doing something meaner than a small boy had been whipped for, and when the master tried to punish them they fought, and many a time the master was compelled to yield by taking his seat at the table. On such occasions his color rose perceptibly, and we little girls gloated over his chagrin.

There were four young ladies attending school the summer this red-headed master taught and fought. They sat on a long bench at the end of the room and had a table before them for their work. One day the master told Jim Martin, a six footer, to stand on the floor for some offense given—there was a boy on the floor already—and Jim not wishing to irritate the master further got up and started toward the center of the room, then changed his mind and went down to the end where the young ladies were and seated himself on the edge of their table, began conversing with them. The master fairly flashed fire, but no blaze was started for Jim was as the little boys said afterwards "biger'n the master and he didn't dast to tech him."

The other poor boy stood by the bell rope until recess.

That was one thing the master had to do, ring the bell, and the rope was in the school room to have it handy.

But it was not all shadow, there were many lights in my young school days. We played many games at

morning, noon and recess. In the summer—out of doors, on the common adjoining the school grounds, and in stormy weather inside the school house, we managed to amuse ourselves in many ways. We played "the needle's eye, ring around a rosy, drop the handkerchief and other games."

Once we were playing "scorn" and I was led up to a boy who had the chair—he had refused to accept several girls—and I went with fear of being scorned too. He spoke out loud so all could hear. You don't think I'd choose her, do you? She's mean and her father makes tubs. I was heartbroken. I thought my father working at his cooper's bench as good as Legara Mee's father, for he kept a little rum shop on a corner. I knew the Mees lived in a better house and wore better clothes than we did, but their father's face was bloated and red, and he was blear eyed and repulsive, and my father's face was clear like a summer's sky.

But money counted then as now, no notice being taken of how it was obtained.

One winter the upper room gave an exhibition. I can remember but two things; one a gipsy scene, and this being the first tableau I had ever seen I thought it very fine.

But the next was our Seth. He spoke a piece called "California Joe." You see people were flocking to California from all over the world at that time, and judging from this piece that Seth spoke some of them must have been rough men who enjoyed a round at fist-i-cuffs. Seth was dressed in one of the antiquated coats from our lintern very much too large for him.

He had on a high hat which ran up to a peak, and a red sash around his waist. I can remember only the first verse, but the rest were in the same strain.

> They clinched like two rampageous bears,
> And both fell on a sit.
> They swore a stream of six-inch oaths,
> And fit, and fit, and fit.

He acted it all out amazingly well, clinching his imaginary antagonist and measuring off the six-inch oaths, and when he came to the last he struck out and shook his fist at the audience. I thought it the most clever piece of acting I had ever seen, and it was for it was my very first experience with acting.

One time when there was a school tree, and each one was to put on a present for some one else, I had been doing work for my sick, young soldier, uncle, in caring for his room, keeping medicine glasses clean, etc. I had earned ten cents, a ten-cent shinplaster. I felt very grand with so much money, the most I had ever had in all my life, and I decided to buy a present for a boy I was very much in love with.

I went to the toy shop and finally settled on a little tea kettle. This seemed more showy than anything my ten cents would purchase.

But when the tree came off that horrid boy had not put on a present for me, and I was very unhappy to think I had parted with my money so foolishly.

Light and shade. I have found it thus ever and after the long shadow of flogging masters light dawned and we got a new one, a better one.

We had had so many and all alike in regard to flogging that we wondered each time what we would get next, and looked forward with some anxiety to his dread arrival. Why shouldn't we? In that day he had control of the intellect and " blue beech " too, and when there was an unusually mean one in power we learned little or nothing, for no child can do well at any task when filled with fear. But one summer bright and early on Monday morning we started to school to begin a new term with a new master, wondering if he were married, would he wear slippers in the school room and run over the desks, or would he be red-headed, knowing that that coloring, when properly developed made an irritable temperament in mankind. There were so many things depending on the master we hoped he would be different from the others.

We went to the schoolhouse early to choose seats, and to get as far away from the master's eye as possible.

Just before time to ring the first bell the door opened and in walked a very handsome young man dressed in a light summer suit, that set off his young beauty to great advantage.

He had a tall graceful form, blue eyes, brown mustache and white flesh and looked a regular Apollo. Who was this person? Some one coming to school? Surely it could not be the master. We had never had any master that looked that young and handsome. He walked along to the teacher's table and began arranging some things there, then we knew he was the master. After surveying him for several minutes I

took my books and sought a new seat. This time as near the master as I could get, and sat there a whole summer and never regretted my second choice of a seat. He was just as good and accomplished as he looked, and we all loved Peter Richmond.

He never went down at recess to make love to the Ann Jones who presided below. He was there to teach us, and he gave us his time and attention.

Who was he and where did he come from, were questions frequently asked by us. We knew no family by that name in or near the village. Away down the river on a farm was a family by that name, but they were Irish and Catholic too, surely he could not belong to them. We did not dare ask him where his home was, and never seeing him in any of our churches did not know where he worshiped.

After he had been in school about two months he told us one morning that his father was very ill and he must go home. The next day we heard that his father was dead, and he was the Mr. Richmond down the river and the funeral would be held in the Catholic church. When the time came there was an unusual crowd thronging that church, we turned out *en masse,* the whole school.

When the body was brought in there was the young master leading his mother, and he looking so sad and broken-hearted, and the conviction was forced upon us then that there were scholarly men belonging to that church, and men who were good and true, for no one could be better than the young master.

He taught our school all that summer and never

flogged any one, and for some reason every one seemed to be on their good behavior and did not need punishment. That was the beginning of the dawn, which has ended in the broad day of light in our schools.

For men know now that the awful punishments of that day only developed a race of fighters and illiterate men and women.

The fate of nations depends upon the education of youth, not on seeing how much physical torture they can endure.

Years have come and gone since the things recorded in these pages occurred, and time changes everything, even the good young master has changed. He is an elderly man now, and a doctor of ability healing the bodies of men instead of training the intellect of youth.

CHAPTER XII

DAYS SPENT WITH MOTHER

My mother was a born berry-picker, just as some persons are born orators, teachers or even politicians. I do not know why one could not inherit berry-picking as well as other things. Her mother was a berry-picker before her, and it ran in the family, and she, not being responsible for what ran in the family, took to berry-picking too.

I once read of a man who had a wooden leg, and a gentleman asked him what accident left him with a wooden leg and he replied "it was not an accident sir, in runs in the family; father had one and so had grandfather," and if wooden legs can run in a family I am sure that berry-picking can too.

In my young days I disliked berry-picking very much for it meant so much to me. When I was too small to pick and the baby had to be taken, father would take us in a boat, and land us somewhere down the river, and mother would spread a blanket on the grass under a tree for the baby, and I would have to sit there and watch it to see that it got nothing in its mouth, and did not creep from the blanket. Our children large and small had plenty of spirit, and the baby did not want to stay right in one place, and I did not either, but stay we must, for mother had a

way of convincing us that we must, and we usually did while she remained in sight anyway. Father, of course, went off to some favorite resort and fished. Berry-picking and fishing are very much mixed in my memory of those early years, for in the summer time there were always some of these expeditions on foot, and all who could be spared from other things took a part.

Mother would get up very early when she intended an inland trip, get the breakfast over as quickly as possible, then leave the other work for my eldest sister; take one of the younger girls with her, and go for miles and miles, never stopping until she found berries, no matter how far the journey. She took me six miles once, and when we got there I was so tired I could not sit up, and spent the greater part of the day lying on the grass resting preparatory to getting home.

Then when we would get home the berries were got ready and sold. Mother always said, she had to pick berries, to make a living, for her family.

I was not able then, nor have I ever been able to understand how she made anything by wearing out so much shoe leather running after berries, and the children doing the work broke many things, and really there was no money in it, and mother only did it because she was born to it, and did it for pure love of it. I have known her in later years go roaming over the fields in search of wild strawberries when she had tame ones going to waste in her garden. But she would say "the wild ones taste better," and for once we could agree with her.

She would always go alone. She did not intend to find places for other people to pick berries. They could find their own places.

I did not like the plan. I wanted some child along and then we could combine work with pleasure. But mother could never see two sides to the question, and we went alone.

She was not a woman of education. It was not to be had by the common people in her young days, but she had a great deal of curiosity and was anxious to see and know what was going on around her, so she got all the information she could by asking questions. If we met a man driving a flock of sheep she would stop him and ask where he was going, and what he was going to do with the sheep; how many he had in the flock; where his home was, and everything concerning his business she could think of. He told her anything he wanted to and passed on, I wondering how she could stop a strange man and ask so many questions.

Next we meet a woman going to town. She stops her and asks what the woman has to sell, and gets the reply "butter and eggs," then mother must know what price the woman expects for her products; how far away her home is; and does she know any good place for strawberries? No, the woman does not, and we trudge on. Soon we come to a house and stop to get a drink, and mother finds a young woman here and begins asking questions; how long has the young woman been married; how many children she has; and how much did they pay for the farm; and winds

up with the usual query: does the woman know where the berries grow in abundance? No, the woman does not, and we trudge on. But coming along home late in the day, we see this same woman climbing her own fence. She has a pail larger than ours and it is full of nicer berries than we have found that day. I learn that people do not always tell the truth when questioned too closely in regard to their own business, and this lesson sinks and takes root in my heart, and I resolve to not ask questions but try and find the truth some other way. Mother makes a different application entirely, for the next morning she is up earlier than usual, and taking one of the other children with her goes straight to that place and comes home at an early hour with a full pail or basket.

The woman gets no good from not telling the truth, and mother is not cured of her fault of asking questions.

There was another thing about the berry-picking that annoyed me. When we would be coming home and find some nice bunches of catnip growing beside the way, mother made us gather it. It was good for many of the ills of childhood, and when we were sick these simple remedies were always resorted to, and altogether the weariness of the flesh, the heavy pail and the large bunches of catnip made us such conspicuous objects on the street that I revolted against it all. Nor was this all my trouble. All my life I have had a mortal fear of snakes. Perhaps I had heard too much of one that had made himself too agreeable and free with poor old mother, Eve; for I knew better who

the first man and woman were when I was five years old than I do now, and the charming qualities of that creeping thing only filled me with horror.

I used to think if Eve had been half as afraid of snakes as I was, the world would have been spared a great deal of misery. I am older now and do not speculate on such grave questions.

Well I was afraid of snakes and mother did not care if I were. She probably knew there were no harmful snakes in the country, and they could not hurt me if they tried; those little garter kind—that was the only kind I ever saw there—but to me they were awful. I really believe I was more afraid of snakes than I was of ghosts, and ghosts were the bane of my childhood. I would get down in the grass and pick as well as I could, and if one chanced to come along, which occasionally happened, I would fly as though pursued by a demon, and mount the highest stone I could find, and then sob and cry.

In vain mother would tell me that snakes could run very swiftly, and probably that one had got to China at his high rate of speed, but I could not believe any such good thing had happened.

I always came home tired and sick at heart. I did not like the berry-picking at all, and resolved again and again that when I was grown up and could do as I wanted to, I would never pick berries.

These were days to be remembered all one's life, but not for rest and pleasure. I had not learned yet that life is made up of just such lights and shadows, and they are in all lives. Perhaps the shadow is not

trudging after berries, but I learned that it could be worse, and at this distance can smile very complacently over the trials of my childhood.

There were four roads leading out from our village One went through the Scotch settlement, one the Irish settlement and one the French settlement; the fourth led to a city some miles distant.

Mother knew every berry place along these roads.

There were little creeks all over the country which would be dried up during the summer months, they were just the places for raspberries and snakes too. I could endure it some while I could stand on the bottom—which was dry sand—and reach out and gather from the bushes, but when I was obliged to get into the bushes, and could not see where I was stepping, I was a very miserable child.

There was an old French woman, named Granny Pidgeon, who lived out from town about two miles. She had an only daughter. I never heard of any man being in the family.

I will relate a circumstance and it will explain the daughter's mental capacity, and how people looked upon this pair.

One "Fourth of July" when there was a parade of "terribles," as they were called at that time, the women were shocked to see Rilley Pidgeon right in among the men, and knowing the poor thing was there by mistake went in to get her out, and it was only a man dressed up and so well representing Rilley that the women could not tell the difference a few feet away.

If people could be so well represented now-a-days, some perplexing question would be put on a better basis right away. But then a man must have a great genius for it to be a good representative of others, and geniuses are born not made.

Well Granny Pidgeon told fortunes, and told them with cards. And mother when going out on the road which led to the great city, and right past Granny's house, always stopped and had her fortune told.

I wish I could paint Granny's picture, but I could never do her justice. She was very thin, there was not an ounce of superfluous flesh on her bones, just enough to hold them together and keep them from rattling, when she moved about. She had deep sunken eyes, sharp weazened features, almost no hair, and looked exactly like pictures I have seen in Mother Goose of the old woman whose business it was to sweep the cobwebs off the sky.

If there were witches in the semblance of human form Granny Pidgeon might have been one. I was always afraid of her, and when mother went in to have her fortune told and said to me "You stay out here and look at the posies," I always remained outside gladly, for I knew that Rilley would come out and together we would look at the flowers. And they were a simple lot, too, like all the rest of the living things around this queer little place.

There was "Old morn" in a bunch by the crazy fence, and "posy beans" running up on tall poles which had been gathered in the woods near by, there were single holly-hocks and "four o'clocks" not open

though, for they keep their beauty for evening and sleep through the day like society belles, and there were morning glories all shut up and waiting to be kissed awake by their lover, the sun of the morning, and there were tall sunflowers which nodded familiarly if you brushed them in passing, and if you slyly looked up they returned the look with a broad stare. There were beds of herbs too, for Granny compounded strange decoctions to sell to foolish maidens, to give to young lovers, to work charms on them. These herbs were unlike anything mother raised in her garden, and I always felt that there was something potent in the herbs that might harm me so I never lingered long to look at them.

Rilley, herself, deserves special notice. She had a round moon face and wore large gold hoops in her ears. Rilley had two virtues, she always wore a smile, and there has been something written lately about the virtue of stupidity—well Rilley had that virtue too. She was only a child. To be sure she was thirty or thirty-five years old, but had she lived to the age of Methuselah she would have been a child still. She had not been endowed with the developing principle, and was just one of God's innocents. Sometimes she would come to the village, and when she did she brought her two virtues, her smile and her stupidity. She would sit on the ground and watch our games, and seemed to enjoy them too.

She could talk but she did not indulge in idle gossip, she was not interested in it and had nothing to say. She was an appreciative listener, always approving

with her smile, but never tried to continue the conversation by argument on either side.

To us she seemed quite wonderful while we were young, but we discovered her defects when we were older, and stamped her accordingly "foolish Rilley Pidgeon."

Their house was a queer little arrangement too. It was built of boards standing on end, there was a peaked roof and a stove pipe sticking out through one side; two small windows, one in front and one in the back directly opposite, so one in passing could see through the house, and everything they possessed of this world's goods was kept in this small house of one room about fourteen feet square.

In passing the door I could see mother and Granny, the cards spread out before them, the eager, anxious look on mother's face filled me with apprehension.

I suppose she really thought Granny could tell the future, and people are anxious to know how things are going to be.

Poor mother! her future came and brought disaster, and for all of Granny's telling her she was not prepared, so the fortune telling did no good.

When Granny had finished the fortune telling mother would come out, and I would say good-bye to Rilley and receive her smile in return, and then trudge along at mother's side, but before going very far she would say to me "you need not tell your father, nor your grandmother, and, further, you need not mention it at home at all." Somehow there was something so convincing about mother that I usually kept the

secret. I can look back from this distance though and see why she did not want them to know. People in that day thought cards a device of Satan to lure unsuspecting souls to their destruction.

There were tales told of things that had happened through card playing, that were nearly, if not quite as bad, as any ghostly experience any one had ever had. I will relate just two of these stories and you will get an idea of the trend of all.

Once upon a time four men had taken a tiny bit of candle and pack of cards and gone into a room to play, saying they would play until the candle burnt out. But when broad day came the candle was there burning just the same, had not been consumed in the least. The men by this time began to realize how tightly they were being held in the grasp of the tempter of human souls, and forsook their foolish course, and sought refuge in prayer and penance and were saved.

Another poor man was not so fortunate. He was addicted to the habit of spending his evenings away from home, and in the company of bad men who were card players. He dreamed one night that he had been playing till late and came home, and in the dark opened the cellar door instead of the chamber door and fell down cellar and broke his neck. He found himself among a lot of men who wore good clothes, but all had such a look of pain on their faces that it filled him with dread. He asked one man what was the matter that he seemed to be suffering so, and the man opened his coat and showed him the blue sulphur flames playing around his body all the time. There was no rest

from it, and for all eternity that must go on as a punishment for card playing.

The poor man awoke in the morning a reformed man—so he thought—told his wife his experiences of the night and said he would never play again. But when night came he forgot his promises and experiences of the night too and went forth and sought his boon companions and played and came home late, and in the dark opened the cellar door instead of his chamber door and fell down cellar and broke his neck. And seeing one part of the dream was true the people all knew he had reached the place where the brimstone blazes were playing around the bodies of dead card players and believers in cards.

That was the reason mother did not mention her visits to Granny Pidgeon at home. Our father would never approve of anything which had been done with cards.

Mother was a hard, practical woman, and if any one had said to her, you will get harmed if you put gunpowder on coals, she would—the first time she was alone—have tried it just to see what would happen.

Mother believed all the old yarns of the long ago, but she was not afraid of anything and gladly experimented whenever she could, just to see if old theories held good.

CHAPTER XIII

EXCURSIONS

The Episcopal Sunday school gives its annual picnic to-day and all is bustle and excitement. We did not sleep well last night and were up at an early hour to look out and see how the weather promises. It is fine and we are happy.

We are to meet at Mr. Dewey's corner and start at ten sharp for the island.

The clock hands are never so slow as on picnic and excursion days; not even so slow when we are sitting for grandmother to earn a copper, and finally we can wait no longer and start. We find ourselves among the earliest arrivals, not more than nine by clock, I guess, but, then, what matter! We can watch the other arrivals and see how each is dressed. We have on neat calico frocks, white petticoats and stockings, stout shoes and a straw or chip hat. We have not arrived at the age where clothes make much difference to us. It is pleasure, pure and simple, we are seeking, and the joys of childhood are so few with us that what we have on does not make us unhappy. And besides common people do not dress over well, and one is not trying to outshine everyone else.

We have one thing to annoy us. We always have that. My sister carries our lunch basket, a neat look-

ing one and large too, the towel is snowy and it all looks nice from the outside, but, oh, dear, it is the contents that annoys us. Other girls come and lift the covers of their basket, and their nice sweet cakes all covered with sugar and little red and yellow candies on top for trimming are displayed. One shows cookies with a raisin in the center of each, and they ask what we have. My sister clutches the basket very tightly and will not let them see and I won't tell. We feel it badly enough and think that mother might, once in a while, let us have something else, but she never does, and if we go we must take that and we would not stay away if it were much worse.

At ten o'clock we are all ready and go over the bridge and cross to the opposite side of the island and settle down on the bank right by the rapids.

Oh, those lovely days! I feel my heart swelling with emotion now at thought of them. Joys vanished forever; days gone never to return, but their influence is living still.

The gentlemen climb trees and arrange several swings, then they make preparations for dinner.

We, the children, run to the water's edge but we do not play in the water there. It is too terrible and we would be drawn in. We are told to enjoy all we can on the island, and just look at the beautiful river.

A steamer is in the canal, on the Canadian side, on her way to the Great Lakes. How small she looks from where we are, for the river is very wide. If she were going down her movements would be different. We will see one going down before the day is done.

We gather any moss or queer twig we find, and some one tells us about them. One boy finds a bird's nest, but he does not offer to take the eggs. There are too many eyes watching him.

We feel curious about the lunch baskets and hope they won't really know which is ours when they begin sorting the good things and getting them ready for dinner.

Two ladies of the committee seize our basket and lift the cover—we feel like shrinking into nothing but cannot take our eyes off their faces—and a little exclamation of delight burst from them. Oh, how nice! they say. What do you suppose it was? It was two dozen of baked apples, and the very nicest ones for baking too. But we do not like baked apples for picnics. We want sweet cakes and candy. Mother knows that a hungry gentleman would rather have a piece of good bread and butter and a nice baked apple than all the sweet cakes with red and yellow candy. We do not know that. We only know that we never have any to carry home. Somehow after the secret is out we feel better and enjoy ourselves accordingly.

We see several steamers on their way down during the day. Oh, my! how fast they go and are soon lost to sight. One raft of timber goes down too, that is more curious to us, and we see many things to ask questions about.

Late in the day the swings are taken down, the baskets gathered up, and when all is ready we trudge home ready for the next excursion or picnic that comes

along, and so far as I am concerned do not have to wait long.

Father spends most of his time on the river in the summer. He has done that way all his life, and no man in the whole country knows the currents and shoal better than he. Gentlemen who come to spend their vacation and fish, or gentlemen of leisure who have nothing else to do but fish come, for the river has an abundance of the finny tribes, and these men all know father and trust him.

One of the most dangerous trips on the river is to go through the rapids in a small rowboat. Father owns two of the very lightest the river will carry and not crush. They are painted—on the outside—white and trimmed with green, the inside is a soft dove color.

Father gets a dollar each for taking persons through the rapids. When he spends the day fishing with these gentlemen, they pay him two dollars for the entire day. These gentlemen know there is no danger in fishing, but shooting the rapids is a feat not many can do so well as father, and they pay him accordingly.

Well he is going to take a gentleman and his young wife through the rapids, and has promised me that if I will be a good girl I may go too. I promise and am happy, for a day spent with him is always a pleasure.

After dinner we go to the wharf and get the boat ready and then row to the dam, there we are joined by my brother and another man and they help, and the boat is lifted up and carried over the dam and

launched in the water above. Then we row to the bridge and the gentleman and lady are there. We take them on board our tiny craft and father rows to the head of the island, one and a half miles away.

The scenery on either side is fine. The banks are low for the dam holds the water, and the river resembles a huge mill pond. The manor house stands out in bold relief and looks very grand and imposing.

We reach the head of the island and see an Indian encampment there. They belong to the tribe known as the St. Regis Indians. The squaws wear dresses of broadcloth with bright bands around the bottom. They have blankets of the same material. They offer for sale in the village, baskets and bead ornaments. I have a bead bag nearly a half century old made by a member of this tribe.

We row down stream a little way and father rests on his oars to let us watch the great ocean steamer. She is going to shoot the rapids too. It is all over in a minute and she is lost to sight. Now we get everything ready for the dangerous descent. The gentleman and lady occupy the forward seats for they are the prominent ones of the party. I sit close to father as I can, and not interfere with his management of the boat. All is ready, and a stroke of the oar changes everything. The river which had been, so far on the journey, as smooth as glass, now looks like a monster in a terrible passion. The tiny skiff strikes the boilers and trembles like a living thing in the clutch of a demon, for only an instant though, for we are thrown out and on like a feather in a whirlwind. The spray

dashes over us, everything seems sweeping along in a mad race, and we feel that we are rushing on to destruction. We take very little note of anything on the island or distant mainland. The whole world seems to be water, and that in a tremendous passion eager to engulf us. The tiny skiff rises and falls with the onward, rushing, rolling, tumbling, seething, glittering, frothing, twisting, speeding, rocking, hissing, battling, roaring, raving, struggling but ever advancing water. There is nothing to do but to sit still and trust the man at the oars. He alone can save us now. One false stroke of the oar, one untrue swerve of the boat and we would be plunged into eternity through those battling waters. But the man at the oars knows the demon who would crush him and his precious load of human lives, and he fears him not. His nerves are steady, his arm strong, and he will carry us in safety through.

It is all over in a few minutes and we run into smooth water three miles down stream. We all drink in a deep breath and feel that we have had an experience of a life time.

Father swings the boat around and rows past Canada island over to the American side where the water is as smooth as though no ripple ever disturbed its surface.

It is a long way home and the gentleman puts out a trolling line. There is always one in the boat, and on the way home catches some fine fish. It is near night when we reach the little wharf where our boat is kept. The gentleman and lady go away after saying: it was the greatest pleasure they had ever experienced on any

excursion. And again father and I, hand in hand, climb the hill home. Another day never to be forgotten.

My next excursion is when the Presbyterians give their annual outing. This time we are to go twenty miles down the river and picnic in the woods somewhere away back near the Grand Trunk R. R. We meet at an early hour at the church. We have our usual lunch of baked apples and the same annoyance. We lived to see the day that we would have given anything for a look at them even.

This time I notice something strange. While sitting on the church steps I look up, the sky is blue and white fleecy clouds are floating overhead; and the moon is there too. Such a queer thing; I never knew before that the moon could be seen in the daytime. I had always heard that the moon was to give light by night. Why was it there in the daytime? Were there two moons? I knew that some nights were dark even when there were no clouds; but I had never thought of the moon not being there; and now another and new idea gets into my head. What is all this about? I shall find out. But no one in my family can tell me. They only know that the world is flat and stands on a foundation; but where the foundation is they cannot tell. But I speculate and keep on asking questions, and later find out that the world moves, and other heavenly bodies move too. I am told to be very careful and not ask too many questions. It is dangerous to ask too many questions—they tell me. I find out

though, all in good time, for everything comes to him who waits, and whose heart is open to the truth.

The people collect and when all are ready we go to the wharf where the steamer is waiting. When all are on board we move off and start down stream. Then there is a great shouting from the land and looking back we see several persons—who are always late—running and shouting for us to come back and take them on board. The boat is turned round and back we go and take them on, though we feel like scolding. This time we start and are not recalled.

A delightful day is spent. We see many things of interest, among others a black bear chained to a post, in a yard we were passing on our way from the boat to the woods where we picnic. We see trains running along on the Grand Trunk, and they interest us, for we have no railroad in our village. We have the beautiful river. On the way home, one girl loses her hat and gets home bare-headed. The captain and superintendent discuss the subject of going up through the canal and coming down through the rapids, which finally ends in going straight home. The cargo is too precious and the rapids very dangerous, and excursions even in those days did not always end well. But this time no accident occurs, and in the late afternoon we are landed at the tiny wharf and the excursions for the season ended.

CHAPTER XIV

MEMORIES OF THE OLD HOUSE

THE house in which my childhood was passed, was built by my grandfather, nearly a century ago, and consequently was but a simple old-fashioned dwelling. There were eight rooms, a hall, pantry and two rooms called linterns. They extended on either side of the chamber from the front to the extreme back end of the house, and were full of all kinds of boxes, drawers, cedar chests, and cupboards, and all of them full of clothing long gone out of date, quilts, and old-fashioned bed spreads, and all kinds of odds and ends handed down from two or three generations.

Whenever there was a "parade of terribles"—as they were called then—they always came to us for clothing, and we could fit them out in almost any style they wanted. Tall, old plug-hats, long or short tailed coats, cravats and knee breeches, in fact nearly anything they needed in the way of garments of uncertain age and antique fashion.

If my mother had taken care of these garments they would have been quite a fortune to her surviving children; but in her day people had begun to want new things and cared very little for the old if they could get new.

That was the era of quilts and feather beds. My

mother had seven feather beds and I guess seven times seven homemade quilts, including homemade bed spreads.

This house did not come to mother as an inheritance, she took care of her father and mother and our great-grandmother, and their household effects came to mother with the old house, and the household effects of long ago consisted greatly of bedding and boxes to keep it packed away in.

We used to light a candle and go into the old linterns and look over those queer old garments, and dress up in them, and imagine we were living in another age of the world. This was one way we had to amuse ourselves when mother was away from home. She never let us do these things when she was there.

It is a wonder we did not set fire to the house, for the rubbish was as dry as tinder, and we were as careless a lot as ever got into mischief.

There were two rooms above beside these linterns, and here we children slept, and these rooms were the scene of many a battle fought with pillows, and rough and tumble combat, mostly on the sly though, for ever since I can remember older people seem to think that little children should be quiet and not do anything as they want to—but just get old heads on young shoulders.

We managed to get a good deal of fun out of life, but it was generally clouded with tears. Light and shade. I have found it thus ever; a dark cloud and silver lining. A streak of dazzling light, then the deep shadow.

Truly God knows best. If it were all light we would be unfitted to live. If it were all shadow we would sink in despair.

We had a parlor which was furnished and adorned in the simplest manner, but a parlor for all that, and it gave us a feeling of satisfaction that we had one room too good to be used every day. The floor was covered with a bright rag carpet, the rags cut and sewed by mother's own hand. The windows, three in number, had each twelve panes of glass and were curtained with dark green paper shades.

There was only one picture on the wall, and that a queer one for such a place. It was a picture of a graveyard, and there were weeping willows—and pines—scattered about, and many graves could be seen. But the central attraction of the picture were a woman and child. The woman was dressed in deep mourning, and was weeping, while the boy stood watching her with a look of deep pain on his childish face. We prized this picture, for it was the only one we owned excepting the one in grandmother's room of the "Battle of Bunker Hill."

In the parlor were a long box stove, six wooden chairs, and a cherry table. Over the table hung a large looking glass. If a departed loved one were lying there all peaceful and still, waiting for the final resting place, the looking glass would be covered with a white cloth to keep out the reflection.

People in my walk in life thought, if a dead body were reflected in a mirror, another would go from that household that same year.

There had been loved ones lying there all peaceful and still, and we had seen the glass with its face hidden several times. But they had been grandparents, aunts and uncles, and these had not touched our young life like the loss of one of our own little band, and we always looked at the covered mirror with awe and hoped it would never be hidden for one of us. And so far as that glass was concerned, it never was. For none of our little band ever lay in state in the dear old room that we thought so fine in our childhood.

The spare bedroom opened off the parlor. It had one window with a paper shade and muslin curtains too, a simple bed, one chair, a little table with a few simple toilet articles placed in regular order on the top, a few hooks in the wall at the foot of the bed to hang dresses on, the Sunday ones, and a rag carpet on the floor, completed the furnishing of this room.

Then there were the hall and stairway, and a dark cupboard where were kept some dishes—of the old willow pattern, blue willow trees and other figures. These had come to mother too with the other things belonging to her ancestors, not by inheritance but because she took care of them.

Mother always said she worked and earned everything, and even in this story would not wish me to say otherwise.

There was a bedroom off from the hall, and here my grandfather used to sleep, and it was from there he was carried into the parlor to await the final resting place.

Then there was the large living room, and no orna-

ment in it other than the spinning wheel, reel and swifts. I have seen mother walk backward and forward by the hour spinning yarn—the rolls—she never carded—lying on the wheel frame, and how strange it seemed to me to see her take a roll and touch it to the short end hanging from the spindle and then give the wheel a turn and backward she would walk and the yarn would spin out ever so long; then with another turn of the wheel the yarn would wind up on the spindle, and when the spindle was full she would run it on the reel. It had some kind of clock-like arrangement, and when forty threads were on it would click and she would put a piece of yarn around, thus forming a knot: forty threads to a knot, ten knots to a skein. We children always had the winding into balls to do. When it was spun, washed and colored, mother would put the skeins on the swifts and we would sit down and wind and the swifts would run round and round, and the faster we could wind the swifter the swifts would run.

I never learned to spin but did learn to double and twist and knit too. At our house mother worked. She said it was harder for her to get work out of little children than it was to do it herself. She had a sister who thought differently.

We always had our meals in this large living room, consequently the cupboard, table and chairs were here too, the only furniture in the room. There were two windows in this room, a hop vine ran up and covered one and a large bunch of sweet brier grew by

the other, and when the window was open the odor from that sweet brier filled the room with fragrance.

In the cupboard were the simplest things for table use, common steel knives and forks and simple cheap crockery, and many a time we sat at the table to eat with no cloth on, but that was the style among common folks in that day.

In mother's room were the two beds, a bureau, stand and generally two chairs. I must not forget the floor of the hall and hall bedroom, they were painted yellow and had large, round, blue spots at regular intervals all over and looked pretty, much prettier we thought than any carpet ever could; the spots gave a tone to the rooms that simple yellow paint could never impart. And then there was the big cook room or common work room. In it most of the work was done. There was a sort of double pantry off from this room where all sorts of odds and ends were kept; candle moulds and old candlesticks, and snuffers, tongs, shovels and old gridirons, a hand stove that great-grandmother used to have carried to church with her in the winter when she was younger before she became an invalid, and the little spider for the shoe grease—the hair grease was kept in a fine dish—for shoes and hair were greased regularly in those days. In most families the mother would call up the children and take a little piece of butter on her hand and rub it, and thus get it warm enough to spread and then rub it on the child's hair, and pat and rub it down until it was greased to her mind, and how funny the child looked

after the greasing process. Little girls had their hair cut off straight across the neck just below the ends of the ears, and there was never a curl, and after the greasing the hair looked straight, damp and plastered down to the head. Shoes were greased much in the same way, only a cheaper grease was used.

In our common work room were the big table and bread trough and dye pot, too, for the housewife did all her own coloring in that day among the common folks. In this room they washed and ironed, brewed and baked, and did their coloring too.

I will tell some of the things mother used to cook for father: he was Dutch and had an appetite for queer things and we taking after him, liked the things he did when mother got them ready.

Boiled sauerkraut and pork was one. Sometimes she made a dish this way: put a piece of pork on to boil, later put in dried apples, and still later in the last stage put in dumplings made of some dough mixture—I do not know the recipe—this dish he called "snitchers and clays." Then she cleaned tripe and cut it up in long wide strips and made great dumpling-like things by using layers of pork and beef and seasoning with salt and pepper, then she sewed them up with stout thread and boiled them until she could run a straw through them, then put them in vinegar to pickle. These he called rullagers. They were nice sliced and eaten cold at supper.

She always made a hundred weight tub full of cider apple sauce and this was nice on our bread between meals. And father always wanted buttermilk soup

every time mother churned. We had a cow, there were so many of us we could not live without one, and she could run around on the street anywhere—no one ever complained that I can remember, cows were free commoners in those days, and good it was for us that they were. Buttermilk soup was made this way: put a piece of butter in a kettle to brown, then put in some bread cut in pieces the size of dice, let them brown, put in the amount of buttermilk wanted, let it come to a boil, sweeten and season with allspice, serve hot.

My father was very fond of this dish. There were many other queer strange dishes that she used to make for him, but this is enough to show that the appetite has changed with the times, and boiled pork and dried apples would hardly be tolerated now, let alone being enjoyed. People have so much now they hardly know how to appreciate their privileges.

There was a great platform at the back door, and there were the cistern and well. The well was forty-six feet deep and just as round as anything could be, lined up with stones, and when we heard any one telling riddles and tell this one "round as an apple, deep as a cup, all the king's oxen cannot draw it up," we knew the answer for our well was just that way.

The old house was all plastered and painted inside, but outside the doors and casings were the only things painted, and the elements had turned the old house a soft dull grey. We liked every nook and cranny of it, though our life in it was far from being all sunshine.

The whipping of children was a great fault in that day. All mothers did it and many fathers did it too.

Our father had faults no doubt but being unkind to his children was not one. Sometimes he whipped the boys but not often though, and he never touched the girls only in the way of tender caress, and when he came in we all sprung for him and were caught up and lifted to the ceiling or perched on his shoulder. Dear father, his was a tender heart and he loved the gentle, quiet things of life. Of course he was just a simple uneducated man, but kind and true for all of that. Education does not always make people true.

Mother's spirit was something like her old Puritan ancestor, Miles Standish, when he planted the cannon on the little church roof and said, it would be a convincing argument in converting the Indians. Mother had a way of convincing every one in her household; but she did many things for our comfort, we were kept clean and whole and had plenty of good, wholesome food to eat. And we were a sturdy lot in our young days. There were twelve in all, but seven are sleeping, life's restless fever o'er; but none of them in the little grave yard where the pines sing their mournful requiem for the dead, but far from the scene of our earliest childhood's joys, griefs, happiness and discipline.

Two died at thirty-two, the other five before they were twenty, and it is well. God knows best and I feel that I shall join them one day in that land where dreams play no part but all is reality and joy and progress forever. Seth the black sheep of our flock died at thirty-two, but through suffering and loss of those dearest to the human heart he had found rest in

God and went gladly and willingly and knew for a certainty that through suffering the human is lifted toward the divine, and the only life worth living at all is a life of loving sympathy toward suffering and undeveloped humanity.

There was a large stone cellar under the old house, and in the autumn it was filled with things for the winter's use. Father liked cabbage well enough to raise a good supply; a barrel of kraut was always made, and we raised bushels of apples and other garden products. So we always had an abundance of common food. Our family library consisted of a Bible and several testaments. I cannot recall any other book on any subject excepting a medical one kept under lock and key. I shall never forget the look of horror on mother's face when she found us one day with this book in our hands, and we examining the queer wood cuts found therein. We never saw it again.

The Bible was read by father every morning and evening when he was home, and a prayer was offered, we all kneeling.

The literature of our family consisted in stories told, and it would have been much better for us if we had never heard some of them. They were strange, queer, ghostly stories only serving to excite the minds of little children. Of course we had a few school books. An old elementary speller combining both reading and spelling came first, and as we advanced others came. I cannot forget my joy when the National reader came, and can repeat now many of the

stories found in that dear old book, my National fourth reader. It was in that book I got my first glimpse of Washington Irving, Longfellow and other authors dear to the heart of every book-loving American boy and girl.

But books played no part in our household whatever. Father would have looked upon a story as a device of Satan to lure unsuspecting souls to their destruction, and mother had no time to read, and beside it was much less trouble to pick up information from others than to spend time reading. So she found out all she wanted to know by asking questions. Though I sometimes doubted the truth of the answers she got, but it was a satisfaction to her and saved her lots of trouble which she would have had if she had read for herself.

CHAPTER XV

SPOOK LORE AND THE HAUNTED HOUSE

I WONDER what life would have been like in the olden time without its haunted houses, ghost stories, and fairy tales. We youngsters had our full share, for father was a descendant of the old Knickerbockers of New York, and was as full of spook lore as he could be, and it needed only a very little urging to set him story-telling.

He had two friends who would drop in of a winter's evening, one a little old Scotch tailor who was as full of Scotch lore as father was of Dutch, and the other a gentleman from the Emerald Isle who never ran down on the fairy stories. How could he? He had lived right among them and had watched their gambols many a time.

Together they formed a happy trio. Irish, Scotch, and Dutch. We would have a pitcher of sweet cider, a dish of rosy-cheeked apples, and a crackling fire, then the stories, fairy, ghost, and spook, made sad havoc with our nervous systems.

Did we really believe them? Yes, we thought every one true, and I believe the tellers did themselves. Those stories were as true and real to them as the myths must have been to the Ancients.

If I tell a few it won't do any harm, for folks are wiser now and know that such things could never have existed only in the imagination of a primitive people.

I used to say I would never let my children hear those old stories, but they have been told to them over and over again; only in the telling I always made a point of saying: These stories are not true and never could have been; but this is the way the literature of a nation begins—by men telling stories.

Father was born and brought up in Canada, in the province of Quebec, among the Dutch pioneers of the early time. He belonged to them and inherited all their peculiar mental training and did not differ from them in the least. How could he help believing their tales?

He used to tell of a woman and her daughter who were witches and could turn themselves into anything they wished to, and many a time when two old cronies would be sitting on the back steps, telling this, that, and the other about some neighbor, a big, black cat would jump right through the fence where there was neither crack nor crevice for her to get through, and the next day everyone would know just what the old gossips had said.

For why not? the old witch had turned herself into a cat and listened only to repeat the tale and make mischief.

I never heard father say that scandal died out because there was a cat to carry the news.

One day a hunter bold, with dog and gun found two deer tracks and followed them for several miles,

only to come up to the old woman and her daughter sitting on a fence to rest, and they were laughing at the sorry chase they had led him by turning themselves into deer.

If he had been angry enough to have shot at them, he could not have hurt them, for no one could kill a witch that way. They always had to be hanged, drowned, or burnt alive. Those three methods of taking off were always effectual.

Once when father was young and engaged in boiling down maple sap for sugar, the old witch came to him in the form of a partridge and sat on a log near the sugar camp and drummed. Father shot at her several times, and sometimes would knock her off the log and the feathers would fly around, but the old partridge would return and keep on drumming. Finally it dawned on him what it was, and knowing he could not kill her with a bullet, let her alone.

He used to tell strange, queer tales of a certain General Waldimer, an English officer living in the backwoods of Canada, an exile from his native land. The British government wanted him for some high treason which he had committed, but they could not catch him, for he had a way of making himself invisible. He had a book of "Black Magic," and could do many strange things.

One day a man who had been trying for a long time to get possession of the book, secured it and hid himself in a wood near by and opening the book began reading the strange things he found therein. He became so interested in what he was reading that he did

not notice what was going on around him; for crows began collecting by thousands, the air was full of them. He was rudely awakened from his pleasure by the old General snatching the book from his hand, and opening it at another place began reading, and the crows as suddenly disappeared. Then giving the man a sound reproof for meddling with what he did not understand left him a sadder but not wiser man.

General Waldimer could go out in the open field and sit quietly down and begin to read this book, and a deer would walk up to him and stand waiting to be shot. It was said that Satan held the deer by the horns, for he was in league with him. In those days men were frequently in league with the devil. We are glad that that has gone out of fashion.

General Waldimer had a little pill which, when placed under his tongue, made him invisible, and once when he was seen to enter a house in a wood, the "Red coats" surrounded the house and thought they had him fast. But he, seeing them through the windows at the ends of the house, put his pill under his tongue and gathered up his papers so as to leave no trace behind him, and walked about among the soldiers, they never seeing him for he was invisible.

Father would generally end his story telling by telling how his father once in company of several men had to spend the night in a little inn in a lonely wood, and General Waldimer was one of the company. As time hung heavily on their hands, they asked the General to perform some trick of magic for their amusement. He told them if they would promise to not

meddle with anything they saw, he would. He took from his pocket an acorn, and cutting a hole in the rough table around which they were sitting, he planted the acorn therein. Soon it sprouted and began to grow, and kept growing until soon there was a miniature oak tree complete in all its parts before them. They heard a sound like something dropping to the table, and there stood a very tiny man with shirt sleeves rolled up, as though ready for work. He was standing on the edge of the table, and had an axe on his shoulder. He surveyed the tree with critical eye as though measuring its size and trying to locate its position when down, then fell to work and soon felled the tree which made a loud swish of sound in the room as it fell.

While he was chopping, a chip flew into one man's lap, and he forgetting his promise, picked it up, and putting it in his pocket thought that he would examine it by daylight.

The man chopped the tree up into lengths and piled them, then cut and piled up the branches, and finally began and gathered the chips and put them in a pile too. But something was wrong, for he began running from side to side and looking at everyone. Finally the old general said, "Someone has something that belongs to him, and you had better give it up," and taking the chip from his pocket, the man threw it on the table, and like the snuff of a candle everything was changed and there was only a big warty toad sitting on the table blinking at the crowd.

There were men there who could face British ball

and bayonet, but not one stout enough of heart to ask the toad what it wanted.

At this point father would reach out and take the apple that had been set to roasting for him while he was story telling.

Then the Scotch tailor would begin, and tell of old burying grounds near lonely woods, and the strange and awful things which befell belated travelers passing that way; of goblins peeping out from behind trees at passers-by; and how he saw a quivering line of light once and it had turned into a woman all dressed in white with arms extended toward heaven. He had lived through it and his hair had not turned grey, but it had been a mystery how he had escaped. He would tell of a certain piece of woods called Blythe's woods, not far from our village, where on any moonlight night at a certain hour one could see a horse rushing madly along the road guided by an invisible rider. The reason they knew he had a rider was that a row of bright brass buttons could be seen which fastened his coat, and the reins were held up tightly as though by some guiding hand.

There was a little girl named Nellie Blythe who came to our church. She came in from the country and I would look at her and feel sorry and wonder did she know how dangerous those woods were. Did she know what a terrible spectre haunted them? I think this story had the worst effect on my nerves of any they told. A ghost that could not be seen, only the buttons on his coat, was awful to me.

At this point the tailor would reach out and take a

glass of cider—he had been known to drink stronger things—and while he would be drying his lips prefatory to going on, the gentleman from the Emerald Isle would take up the time by telling of fairies and elves and of bog and dell where they held their nightly revels. He had seen them many a time sitting under great toad-stools and climbing the stalks of flowers and showering petals on the passersby.

These were not grewsome things like the ghosts, but they were to be feared, for they were playing pranks on someone all the time. Yes they had played a mean prank on him once. He had his eye on a bright lass and made love to her and intended to lead her to the priest some day, but when these fairies found him going there to see her they came around him in great numbers and climbed on his back, pulled his hair, hid in his pockets and tumbled him about until he was not fit to be seen. Then when he got where his sweetheart was, they came down the rude chimney and sat in a corner and made such sport of him that finally he gave up going there entirely, and it all ended in his leaving Old Ireland, and he hoped he would never set his foot in it again.

Sometimes during these recitals we would feel a fever heat, as though our blood ran wild, and again it seemed that we were frozen in our chairs, and many a time have I seen my eldest sister move her chair a little nearer the center of the room and mother would say, "Come children, it is time for you to go to bed," and we would be sent off without delay. Our only light, a feeble tallow candle whose flickering flame

cast phantom shadows in every corner of the old chamber. We would tumble into bed, cover our heads and dream over the tales told by the old chimney.

You could never have understood how we felt about the haunted house if I had not told you a few of these stories (and only a few). I believe I could fill a volume, and that a large one too, and still have some left to start another.

These stories were the bane of our childhood. Our every act was controlled by them, and we loved the daylight, feeling safer at that time; for ghosts do their walking abroad at night. The haunted house stood on a corner in a central part of the village; but open to the river where the moon when full could light up the great windows almost as bright as an electrical display.

I have a suspicion that the poor moon was some in fault that the house was haunted at all, but this is only a modern innovation.

Well away back in the early time an Ogden had built the big house for his own occupancy, and it was a fine, large house. He must have been a rich man in this world's goods, but poor indeed in soul development. He had an uncontrollable temper, and once when he became very angry with a negro boy he owned as a slave, he rushed at him in the great front hall and knocked out his brains with a stick of wood, and the murdered boy's blood was spattered around on the wall and could never be washed out. Any one could see it there any day.

There was no danger of our going there to see and examine the spot, for the poor boy's ghost had haunted the place ever since, and we always gave that place a good letting alone.

We had seen the windows lighted up, but we were in company of so many persons that a spirit would not have had a ghost of a chance to appear. They never appear to large crowds.

A young English gentleman who came there one summer for the fishing and bird shooting on the islands, was visiting at the great house, and one day while on the island hunting, his gun exploded and the charge was blown into his arm and finally it gave him lockjaw from which he died.

Father was there several days and nights at the time caring for the unfortunate young man.

He said he did not see anything superstitious, but he had heard doors opening and closing in the dead of night when the family were all in bed, and nothing but invisible hands could do that.

The great yard was full of flowers, but the lilacs and roses grew, blossomed, and faded unmolested there, and there was not a boy in the village mean enough to even think of molesting any fruit that grew around the place.

The youngsters, large and small, had a deep respect and awe for the house and its surroundings, and passed it by with looks askance, expecting to hear a ghostly shriek or see a bloody face peering from the window, if we even paused on the walk outside. So

we were always in a hurry when going by the old haunted house.

The last family that lived there in my childhood, was a Presbyterian minister and his family of grown-up daughters. The mother had passed beyond where realities exist and shadows play no part.

I have forgotten the minister's name, but I used to look at him when he was preaching and wonder if any spirits came to him at dead of night.

These people ran in and out in the dark as well as in the daylight, and did not seem to mind the old haunted house at all.

It took me years and years to understand why they were not afraid.

It was because they were an educated and cultivated family, and education drives out superstition as well as other things.

Our country has changed more through the influence of the public schools, than all other influence combined.

Let us keep on educating the children, that is our only salvation if we expect to become the greatest nation—which really seems our destiny.

We have monsters stalking abroad in our land still, and they do not belong to the imagination either, but are real substance and make themselves visible in many forms.

There is no need for me to moralize. Men are seldom made better by telling them their sins. But a better reformation than the world has ever seen will

come when noble, God-like actions take the place of seeming, and a deeper soul development opens our hearts to our brother's needs—then we can truly share with him and Christ's kingdom be established in the world.

CHAPTER XVI

DURING THE GREAT REBELLION

It was during my childhood that we were plunged into the greatest Civil War the world ever saw. I was too young at first to understand its full significance, but it was brought home to me, child though I were, and before it ended I knew something of its horror.

There were war meetings in churches, halls and even in the open air on street corners, and in any place where men could be congregated together and speakers set forth the condition of the country in such glowing, burning words of fire that a wave of patriotism and enthusiasm was kindled that nothing could quench. A gun had been fired and it reverberated throughout the length and breadth of our land. It echoed and reëchoed the wrongs of a down-trodden people and told of a nation dismembered, disgraced and polluted.

A company was enlisted in our village and in a short time was on its way to the front. I can remember how these soldiers looked marching through our streets, and mother's youngest brother in front playing the fife; they were gone and then the sorrow began. It was so easy to listen to the speeches and feel thrills of patriotism, but when it was all over and the fathers and sons gone then the time of tears had come, and weeping took the place of enthusiasm. Not that

any were disloyal but that loneliness and heart ache would creep in, not knowing how the end would be.

It was not long before we knew how the end would be for some, for in a very short time the reports began to come in and they told of brave men loyal to the call of their country who would never return to the homes which were now left desolate. And as some fell by the wayside others enlisted and pushed on to the front to take their places, and before long there was scarcely a home that did not have some loved one gone.

During the first years of the war, dear great-grandmother would gather us around her bedside in the twilight and tell of the Revolutionary days when she was a child, and of how those brave patriots fought for freedom, and how they all suffered together, men, women and children. She explained to us the cause of the Civil War. Said it was principally to save the Union which our forefathers had fought and bled for, thus comforting us all and keeping up a brave patriotic feeling among us.

And the patriotic songs, how they filled the air! they were even sung in churches, too. "We are coming father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong," "Away down south in Dixie," "The star spangled banner," "Brave boys are they, gone at our country's call," and a host of others not gone from my memory like many things for these were stamped indelibly and time cannot erase them.

I remember how we looked for the newspapers, and how eagerly the long lists of names would be scanned

in search of loved ones who might have fallen in the battle lately fought, and how the women gathered in knots to discuss war news, and form plans to send delicacies to sick and wounded soldiers.

Before the war had been long in progress my uncle the minister went and his two eldest sons followed. After a year he came home and recruited a company and went as captain, his youngest son having gone before he came home. Those were patriotic days, when the father and three sons all went and left no man at home, only the weeping wife and children.

No wonder these things were stamped indelibly on my memory. They were the most stirring times any nation had ever seen: brothers fighting to the death, while the women remained at home and scraped lint and rolled bandages, and made comfort bags for the brave boys gone many of them never to return.

Talk of heroes and martyrs; they did not all fall on the battle field, neither were they all offered on the altar of their country. I have witnessed scenes as a child, that time can never efface from my memory. Scenes of the sorrows of wives and mothers who had lost all that made life dear to them, and the suspense and agony of remaining behind were—many times—infinitely worse than being in the thickest of the fray. Think of a woman's agony when she knew her husband or son was wounded and in a rebel prison.

Sorrow and pain have their place too, and while the nation was bleeding at every pore, the people were making giant strides in soul development, and when that awful Civil War should end, we would never

be just the same again. We were to wear the stamp of pain and suffering and out of it all should rise a higher and better civilization, but years and years must pass away before it would all be accomplished.

War is a calamity, but many times people develope faster through calamity than through good fortune.

I was living with my aunt during a part of this time, and her home was changed and almost desolate, for my uncle was a kind, genial man and we missed his presence. And aunt seemed even more determined during his absence that I should be miserable, and I was lonely and unhappy. Right when things were the worst an uncle drove over to carry us to great-grandmother's funeral. I was put under the Buffalo robe, and when they let me look out I saw the steeple of the Catholic church, and in a minute we were home. I did not go back with her for my dear father had enlisted and in a few days would be gone. Father was a Canadian, and though living in the states had never taken out naturalization papers, and, of course, if he had not wanted to have gone could have remained at home. But he seeing the need of men strong, good and true enlisted and went.

Before the war ended there was scarcely a sound man left at home. If perchance there was a sound one he was represented at the front by some one hired to go in his stead. I recall to mind one, a drygoods merchant on a small scale. When he was drafted—he had not tried to go—hired a substitute and paid the fellow three hundred dollars to represent him. The man left the money for his family to live on during

his absence, and when he returned in less than a year he had left one limb behind. Years later the merchant was peddling milk for a living, while the substitute was living comfortably in his old age on a pension Uncle Sam had given him as a recompense for the lost limb. Everything has its price, and it is just as well to pay first as last, for pay we must.

Prices which were before the war at rock bottom had gone up so high that poor people could hardly live at all, and there was Canada right in sight, her prices away down as usual. Of course the temptation was great and the law broken all the time, for every family that could beg, hire or even take—without asking—a boat went to Canada nights to purchase goods. This made a complication of affairs in our country, and soon Uncle Sam understood that the loyal people at the north must be watched, while he fought the unloyal ones at the south, and a company of soldiers was sent to our village to guard the lines and keep people from smuggling. But for all this vigilance people smuggled right before their eyes. It was in the days of hoops and they were the most convenient things for smuggling that were ever invented. A woman could put on her hoop skirt and a petticoat having very large pockets over it and let the pockets fall inside the hoops and in that way she could smuggle tea, shoes, calico and many articles useful to her household, and the soldiers seeing her walking along would never think—or if they thought—they did not dare question her—she was smuggling.

These soldiers ran out of provisions and were fed

by the people several days, and they were at our house, some of them, to eat many times. And mother began questioning them and found that they were from Massachusetts, and one was mother's cousin, her father's brother's son. You see his name was the same as mother's name had been, and she was curious. And the man did look like one of mother's brothers, and questions brought their relationship to light. If the man had been possessed with half the curiosity our mother had, and had asked one-half the questions, I am afraid poor mother would have been in trouble, for she made very many visits to Canada to see father's relations during that time, and always wore her hoops and returned after night.

But then you see we had business in Canada, we could go there to visit our friends.

I have gone over lots of times wearing old shoes and returned wearing good new ones. But the soldiers never questioned our mother. She was good to them and fed them, and the best way to a man's heart is through his stomach after all.

This company of soldiers—for some reason—was commanded by a lieutenant instead of a captain. Perhaps their captain had fallen in battle, anyway he was not there and the lieutenant felt the importance of his position. One could see him riding around the village, his sword dangling at his side, any time during the afternoon. He did not even mess with the other soldiers, and made one of them care for his horse and one day when this man had neglected to do everything as he, in his fastidious way demanded, he

called the common soldier up to him—he being mounted—and using his riding whip as an instrument of torture belabored the poor man over the head and shoulders. It made quite a feeling against the lieutenant in the village and caused me in after years to think—when I was old enough to reason for myself—no wonder many a subaltern fell on the battlefield. Probably there are men alive to-day who could tell a tale if they wanted to.

This bit of army discipline was stamped indelibly on my memory too.

As the war progressed and men grew scarce the young boys began to go. My eldest brother, among the rest, started for Madrid to enlist, but as Providence would have it he returned that same night and mother was saved that agony, for she seemed always to have a more tender love for this her first born than for any other child.

But when my uncle the minister recruited his company she sent Seth to join his company as a drummer boy, but Seth fell sick at aunt's house with measles, and before he recovered my uncle had gone, and Seth returned home, and mother had to make the best of the situation.

We must not conclude that all were loyal and true, three of my great cousins went, two went south to join the army, one went to Canada and remained there until it was all over, and he did not lack for company either. There were a good many Americans residing in Canada during that sad and dreary time.

The summer after father went to the war I was sent

to aunt's to stay and crying did no good. Mother could make use of my sister older than I, and I must go there and she stay home.

That summer on the Fourth of July when patriotism ran high if it ever did—among women, children and old men—there was something going on to feebly celebrate the grand and glorious Fourth, that our forefathers had established with their blood. I just as anxious to see it as a child could be, my aunt made me walk two miles and gather strawberries for a shortcake for dinner, before I could go to see the celebration. I was so tired when I got there that it had lost all its charm, and I cannot remember even what they did. It was all lost in the shadow of that long walk and those berries.

Mother came there on a little visit during the summer and brought our baby brother, a little child who could walk but still wore dresses, and I thought him the nicest child in all the world, and mother brought another thing, a new calico dress for me.

She made it for me, and one morning put it on and told me to go and show it to my great aunt and her daughter. I never thinking a trick could be played on me went cheerfully feeling proud of my new dress. They probably knew that I had been sent there for a purpose and detained me as long as possible, and finally when I got so far as the gate on my homeward way I saw the stage roll past the corner away down street and I hurried on. When I got to aunt's I found mother gone. She had gone on that stage. I ran through the house screaming aloud, but aunt soon put

a stop to that, and I was there all that summer attending school a part of the time and the rest doing errands and taking care of her children, for there were two now.

My uncle's eldest daughter was home a part of the time that summer, too. Her education was finished and she was going west to become a teacher and was at home making preparations for her departure, and one young man, not in the war for some good reason, came several times to see her. This annoyed my aunt. I think she was miserable any way when any one was contented or happy around her, and she determined to get rid of the fellow some way, and finally decided that I her slave would help her out of this, too. So one night when he was there she awakened me—I slept with her—and told me to cry as hard as I could, and in the morning she would give me a lump of sugar, and I, not being able to disobey her anyway set up a loud crying, saying I had a pain in my side. This is what aunt told me to say. The daughter came and gave me peppermint and finally the young man built up a fire, and she put on hot cloths all to no purpose, the pain got worse or at least the crying did, and finally I becoming exhausted turned over and said, oh aunt! I can't cry any longer and went to sleep. The young man took such a broad hint and was never seen at that house again. But somehow my aunt and her daughter, by marriage, though never good friends, were even worse after. And soon the daughter left for the west and never returned to her native state.

During this summer my young uncle's three years

of enlistment expired, and he knowing the need of experienced men reinlisted for five years more, or during the war, and came home on a short furlough. A few months later he was taken sick and came home to recuperate, but the disease—chronic dysentery—had gained such a hold on his system, weakened by long marches and exposure, that there could be nothing done to save his life.

I was at home that winter, and sat in his room day after day keeping things tidy for him, and attending his wants all a child could.

Poor young soldier! life's battles were ended for him. He died on Washington's birthday, and was buried the twenty-fifth, on my birthday.

I ought to remember things which happened in my childhood. My life moved in a narrow channel, but my experience was wide enough.

I remember when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated as though but a year had gone by since that tragic event. In that day the church bells tolled off the age of the departed, but now all the bells tolled together, flags were hung at half-mast and churches were draped in mourning and a nation already deep in the blood of their brother mourned their savior slain.

Mother had gone to Albany to see father. He was sick in a hospital and we were very anxious about him, and this awful tragedy coming at that time impressed it more thoroughly on my young mind.

The war was rapidly drawing to a close, but the time seemed long to us at the north and we thought father would never return to us. But one day in the

early summer we children were sitting on the grass talking over the surrender of Lee's army and the fall of Richmond when we saw an old gray haired man approaching. He was dressed in faded Army blue, and was so feeble that he was supporting himself with a staff.

We did not know him until his face lighted up with the same dear smile as of yore. It was our father returned to us an old man in such a short time and he still so young. He was only forty-six at that time. He never recovered his robust health.

My heart almost sinks when I think of the mutilated men who returned to the arts of peace, the empty sleeves and trouser legs, the enfeebled in health, which were in many cases worse than the loss of limbs. All unsettled and restless. They had gotten a taste for adventure, and thought, many of them, that all they had to do was to go south and pick up a fortune and return north and enjoy their remaining days in luxury.

Times which were before the war so dull were brisk enough at its close, and if these adventurous men had invested what they got from the government in something at home many of them would be better off to-day, but the spirit of adventure had taken possession of them and many of them started out over the face of the earth wandering.

If my father could have looked into the future one short year I am sure he would have done differently, and probably saved his family. But he too was possessed with this spirit, and thought the south the open door to wealth and opulence. Beside he had

the boys to provide for and the sunny but devastated south had room for all.

He was not long in convincing mother that it would be best for all, and in the autumn we were to go.

We were all home that summer and all meant a good many souls. At this time there were nine children in our family, my eldest brother in his nineteenth year and the youngest three years old. And as the daughters of the poor usually marry young, my eldest sister—one year younger than our eldest brother—was married and had a child a few months old.

We were all to go south. She and her young husband and child along with the rest, making thirteen souls in all. A large family for a man of small means to start out with on such a journey, and in such a time just at the close of that terrible Civil War.

CHAPTER XVII

OUR JOURNEY SOUTH

So in the autumn of 1865 our plans being all completed we started south to seek our fortune in that sunny land where fortunes were lying in wait for just such unsophisticated folks as we were.

Mother decided to not sell the old place, but rent it, and if we were not suited with the new country to which we were setting our faces we could return and have a home to return to.

All of the household effects that could be sold were parted with, and those not saleable were stored in the old linterns. The dishes and bedding were packed together with the clothing and all made ready for the long journey south.

Mother had two friends in Leavenworth City, Kansas, men whom she had known from childhood. They had gone there poor boys, and at that time, 1865, were getting rich. At first they had worked and saved and finally had gone into the retail grocery business, and by good management and thrift had gained enough ground in business to extend their trade to both retail and wholesale, and seeing they were doing so well there, to that city father decided to go.

We said good-bye to relatives, friends and neighbors

and early one morning found ourselves on board a steamer that would take us to Ogdensburgh where we would make final arrangements for the journey south.

Now we were grand folks indeed, and going a long journey, too. We had seen the steamers going up and down so many times laden with their happy throngs of people journeying, and we had wished and even longed to go on a long journey, too. Now our time had come and we were really on the way.

We left the little wharf and crossed over to the other side, entered the canal through the locks and steamed past our Canadian relatives who were on the bank waving their last good-bye.

How beautiful the river seemed to us now that we were on its bosom perhaps for the last time. How the water rippled and gurgled over its rocky bed as though trying to remind us of joys vanishing with this great change we were making. But for all the tumbling and tossing water could suggest of joy or happiness we were glad to be on this journey for we had longed to see other places, and perhaps they would prove more beautiful places to us. Perhaps, who could tell? We entered another canal higher up to get around the Lachine rapids, and sometime during the day arrived at Ogdensburgh.

Across the river was Prescott, and father pointed out the old "Wind Mill," and told us of how as a young man he had belonged to the British Army for a time, and was at the battle fought at this place, and it took the name from the old mill, and is known in history as the battle of the Windmill. Nine men had

been killed in the battle, and in his young days that had seemed fierce fighting, but since the great Civil War it was only to be smiled at.

We saw so many ferry boats and so many new and strange things we were delighted with the world, and only hoped it would keep on growing larger and larger to our vision. We were so anxious to see some of it. Father had told us of Albany and Washington and Richmond and other cities and places he had seen and we wanted to see this great world too.

He took us around Ogdensburgh all he could and we were delighted with all we saw.

A large steamer was lying at the dock taking on her cargo, and when she would be ready we were going aboard, and would be in Chicago in a week if we had a good voyage.

I cannot remember when we started but it was during the afternoon when we went through the Thousand Islands; I shall never forget the scenery, and when we steamed into Lake Ontario just as the sun was setting in vermillion and gold, and all its radiant glory glinting across the water in rippling shimmering waves of beauty; no artist can paint, no pen can portray, and nothing but the soul can understand, and that in dumb, speechless wonder, at the glory of nature that can never be put into words; I thought the world all water and the water all a golden light, and my soul drank in the beauty of nature, and I was glad that God had let me see some of His wondrous works.

My life had been so narrow and cramped I reveled in such glory as the Thousand Islands, and the sun

sinking into Ontario showed me. Again it was day when we came to the Welland Canal and what a mysterious place that seemed—a place where steamboats and other craft could walk up and down hill—then we began to fully understand the use of canals, could see how progressive man had even outwitted old Niagara, and the wonders of nature, combined with the great achievements of man set us to thinking many things, and to ponder on the vastness of things in this world. We could look away down and see Ontario so blue and peaceful, we climbing higher and higher, but we reached the top at last and soon finished the last fourteen miles and slipped into Lake Erie and then our troubles began.

It was late in the season anyway, and the weather which had been fine changed and the wind blew a hurricane—at least it seemed so to us—and we were a sick lot.

We were traveling second class but were not alone. There were two families on board in our class, one an Irish family. I think there were fifteen children in all and they were very ignorant and furnished much amusement. They all expected to go to the bottom and wept, and prayed, and ate, and were sick at the same time. "Jamie me darlint we'll all be drownt," was heard continually from the mother—while the father comforted her by telling her "Yis, we surely will."

But the other family were very different. They were quiet, well dressed Americans and had plenty of money. They were young people and had two small

children. But the young wife's sister was going west with them, a pretty, quiet, young woman who had some money too. These people had expressed their money, the major part of it, but it seemed they had a goodly sum with them.

This was the reason it became known. There was a young man with them who had made love to the sister and they were engaged to be married, and he was going west, too, but all the time he wanted to carry Katie's money and she did not want him to, and the brother-in-law would not let her trust the man with the money and the young man sulked and Katie cried, and knowing we would think strangely of their conduct the woman told mother what was wrong.

Mother being of a very practical turn advised them never to let the young man have a cent—saying that if he got that money he would leave the boat at the first port we came to and that would be the end of the money and man too.

They left the boat at Milwaukee, the young man was still with them sulking and Katie at her tears.

If Katie married him she must be weeping still, if not dissolved to tears long since.

My eldest sister had a very fine voice and had sung in the choir for a long time. I could sing very well, too. We did not have trained voices, oh, no, that was not the way common people sang thirty or forty years ago. We, if we could sing at all, just sang in the natural voice God had given us and furnished entertainment for the untrained ears of our hearers.

My sister two years older could sing a very little,

but she stood with us always and sang as well as she could.

We were not a day out before it became evident that people were on board who could sing, and we, if we would have complied, could have been singing all the time. The Captain or Mate would come for us and we would go on the forward deck and sing, and several times there were crowds gathered on the docks when we were in port to hear us sing those glorious songs of old—

"Lift up your eyes, desponding freeman,
Fling to the winds your needless fears,
He who unfurled your glorious banner,
Says it shall wave a thousand years."

and others just as stirring. Somehow there was such a soul inspiring, stirring ring to the old patriotic songs. They seemed to lift people toward freedom and liberty.

Freedom and liberty are wide terms and mean so much. I often wonder how many are free in this "Land of the free and home of the brave."

When we reached Detroit mother's brother came on board, a man we children had never seen. He was very much disturbed over our move, and told mother it was a great undertaking, for the south was so different from the north with its clear, cool, sweet air free from malaria. He was a practical man and had seen more of the world than mother had and knew some of its traps to catch unsuspecting victims.

We bade him good-bye and passed on. The storms were terrible and we were sixteen days in reaching Chicago. At one time we cast anchor in Saginaw

Bay and lay four days, and the wind howled, and the white caps rolled, and the Irishman lost his hat and wanted the captain to put out a boat and recover it. But that hat was never recovered, and the poor man had to tie a scarf around his head, and when they left the boat he was still wearing the red scarf and all things considered it was very becoming to him.

While we were lying here at anchor we could see the land not far away. It was a trackless wilderness of primeval forest, and a lonely log house with blue smoke curling heavenward from its chimney completed a picture of desolation.

I remembered this place years after when I was a prisoner in just such an out of the way place where solitude and forest made up almost the sum of my existence.

But finally we reached Chicago. What a strange Babel that seemed to us. The river was full of craft, large and small, and along its sides—for it had no banks—were those tall, grain elevators, the bridges swinging open every minute to let some boat pass, and a multitude coming and going; all seemed wonderful to our young and inexperienced eyes.

Truly the world was growing larger to our vision, and if we kept on we would see some of it, too.

The "Great Union Depot" was a wonderful place. I had never up to this time been on the cars but once, and that only a distance of eight miles; but now we were going hundreds of miles, and I knew I should never be tired of the cars.

We pulled out from Chicago and ran across the state

of Illinois, and had no trouble of any kind. But the world had changed from sky and water to sky and grass, and we admired the rolling prairie even more than we had the rolling lakes.

When we arrived in Quincy we began to have trouble. The baggage-master wanted father to go on and he would send our baggage after, but mother declared she would do no such thing, and here we remained until our baggage went, too. We saw a family at Leavenworth that went on and never saw their baggage again.

We crossed the Mississippi and somehow after living on the beautiful St. Lawrence we did not think much of "the Father of Waters." Here in Hannibal we had to wait for a train and were there over night. We slept in the depot, all but mother and my eldest sister; they with some others went to a farm house for the night. There was no hotel nor town at Hannibal at that time, and delayed travelers put in the night as best they could.

Sometime the next day a train came along and we boarded it. It was an old engine and the fire plate was worn out, and we would run about two miles and then were jerked nearly out of our seats coming to a dead standstill. This kept on hour after hour, stopping long enough to get up steam to run two miles then jerked again.

You must remember that things were pretty well dilapidated toward the south at the close of the Great Rebellion, and the further south the worse the dilapidation.

I think we were a week in getting from Chicago to Leavenworth city. We were so tired of cars we never wanted to see another train, and when we stopped at St. Joseph, Mo., we had to stop another night and wait for a train which took us so far as Atchison, then we boarded a boat, and the queerest one we had ever seen or ever heard tell of. It was neither a lake steamer nor a Noah's ark, though we were inclined to think it was made after that pattern, all but the wheel. We did give that the credit of being modern. It was a stern-wheeler and the wheel was as tall as the boat, and was the funniest thing ever fastened on a boat as a means of locomotion. But it took us in safety to Leavenworth City, our destination. But what a strange sight was this for our northern eyes. The city swarmed with negroes. I saw children five or six years old nude, clinging to their mother's dress trying to hide.

We found a hotel but board for our family would be thirty dollars a day, and our money was getting low and we could not stay there. Father began to look around and found a man who wanted just such sturdy looking men and boys as we had in our family to work for him.

He owned a saw mill across the Missouri river at City Point, and here we decided to go. Father went over and looked up the prospects, and the man furnished lumber for a house—a very small one—and in a day or two it would be ready for us.

It was only the second day before we could go over and occupy it. Mr. Beckwith, father's employer, was

very kind and seemed to take a great interest in us, and sent a mule team for us. We had so many boxes, valises, bundles, and lunch baskets, it would need a large wagon for them and us too. But when we were finally loaded on, we drove to the ferry and drove right on the flat steamer and sat there on the load, never once trying to get down. We had been three weeks on the journey and were exhausted from loss of sleep and inconvenience.

We must have created a great sensation, but when one is traveling there are so many things out of the ordinary, people get used to queer things and only smile. We had smiled and now took our turn at being laughed at.

We finally landed, but in the strangest place we had ever seen. In fact we did not know there were such places in the world up to that time. All the houses were like Granny Pidgeon's, none better, and my eldest sister declared that we had reached the jumping-off place. Some women with pipes in their mouths were standing outside a hut, their arms akimbo, and a broad grin on their faces as though they had never seen a family before. There were negroes everywhere, and they rolled up the whites of their eyes and showed rows of white teeth, and we knew they were amused at the very muchness of our family too.

Our house differed from the others in only one particular, it was perfectly new. So new that the roof was only half on and there was not a window or door or floor. There were openings where a door and window would be some day, but when the day came the

door was hung and the window hung too. Father opened places in the sides for windows, and the boards thus removed were fastened back with leather hinges, and during the day were left open and at night were closed.

It is wonderful how little we mortals really need. Adam and Eve must have been a happy couple with no house to care for, and no worry about fashions, nothing to do but to enjoy nature pure and simple as God made it.

Where were we to sleep? Father answered the question by making four little berths against the wall, like those seen on the steamer. It was such a convenient way and did not take up much room. There were four or five boards laid across under the peak from plate to plate, and there a bed was arranged for the two large boys.

We managed to get on somehow, and we children were so tired we did not care where we stopped if we only stayed and got rested.

We found pawpaws and late grapes in the woods, and father found two snakes twisted around a limb.

We had truly found a new world and the old one seemed far away, and we knew by our little experience that the world was large and we scarcely a drop in the great bucket of humanity.

CHAPTER XVIII

SOMETHING OF OUR LIFE THERE

City Point was in its extreme infancy when we arrived there the year the Great Rebellion closed. There were only two public buildings, a small store and lager beer saloon; the store was the only two-story building in the place; the saloon was built of logs and partly under ground to keep the beer cool—the drinkers seemed to be cool and self possessed without any device to quiet them.

There was no definitely laid out town, no streets nor plan at all. People came and built a cabin any place where they happened to think best; and such queer looking abodes as they were. One was built against a large cottonwood tree which had been felled and found hollow. The trunk served for one side of the house; logs were built up in a strange manner around three sides, and the roof rested on the tree trunk. Every building, large and small, had a mud chimney exactly like pictures shown of them in some of our leading magazines.

There was an island lying in the river between City Point and Leavenworth City, and a small stream which cut this island off from the main land was called the slough, pronounced sloō. It was quicksand bottom

and nearly dry when we arrived there, but the late rains filled it some and there was a little ice on this small stream that winter, a thing that had not been in years.

The people all "took up" water from this slough—of course it was Missouri river water—put it in barrels and tubs, then sprinkled meal on top and when it was settled used it, there being none better. It was vile to our northern taste, but we had to use it along with the rest. It was full of mud and filth, and when first dipped from the slough if we would put our hand under and stick up a finger, we could not see our palm when the water was at the first finger joint. Father dug down and got water, but it was even worse, and colored a tin dish in a day or two, so we kept on using the Missouri river water.

City Point is situated in the bottom lands of the Missouri, and at that time was a very unhealthy place. The inhabitants were refugees from Arkansas, people who had fled from their homes before the advance of the army, and getting to this point settled or squatted for a time and they were the true founders of the place, and the place at that time was worthy of its first settlers, for Adam and Eve in their most sinless state were never one-half so unsophisticated as the primitive inhabitants of City Point.

There was no cleared land in the city nor around it either for that matter.

Mr. Beckwith put in the saw mill and was getting out the logs which were converted into lumber in his mill. There were men chopping wood all around us,

and burning coal pits and getting out anything which the timber could be converted into, axe helves, railroad ties, etc.

Work was plentiful and wages good. Seth went to work in the mill wheeling saw dust at two dollars a day, and he only fifteen years old. Every one in our family who could work was employed. Father could get fifty cents apiece for axe helves, and hickory and pecan—both the very best kinds of timber for the purpose—could be had for the taking, and he could earn three dollars a day at that. Sometimes he helped burn coal pits, for he understood that kind of work too.

The wood was chopped into cord wood lengths, and stood on end in a round mound, an opening left in the top for the fire, and vents arranged at intervals around the bottom, then all covered with earth and packed down hard, the fire built in the top and covered with earth too.

These coal pits must be watched very faithfully, so that the coal as it chars is kept from blazing, that would ruin everything. It must be kept smouldering by keeping out the air, so men who burn coal pits must work day and night too.

Father had a flat-roofed hut by the coal pits, to nap in, and it was our childish delight to troop off there and spend the evening at father's side, and watch the smoke oozing from the dark mound, and listen while father told tales of the days when he had burned coal before. At such times he talked of the stars and pointed out the North star and the Great Dipper and

Milky Way, and told us of the nights on the battle field, where he had lain. Dear father, he was always glad to have us around him, and was so kind and good we delighted to be with him.

There were so many strange things in this new place that we had found, we were finding out something every day. We made journeys into the woods and gathered bushels of nuts, hickory, pecan, and black walnut. Father made a mud chimney for us just like our strange neighbors had, and we sat around the chimney and cracked nuts to our hearts' content. We had never had such a luxury before—all the nuts we wanted—and we were happy in a childlike fashion, present wants being satisfied, future cares could take heed for themselves.

When we first went to City Point we had a tiny sheet iron stove, so small that enough could not be cooked on it at one time for our whole family, so the meals were cooked in sections. Seth would rise first, or rather come down from the peak where he slept, set the pipe off the stove and carry the stove out to the door and shake the ashes out, and set it up again and build the fire. There was no hearth, only nine round holes across the front for draft. Soon the little stove would be so hot that it grew as red as a cherry. Then my eldest brother came down and made the first breakfast. I do not know why he did, but he was young and strong and enjoyed the novelty I think. He made corn cakes and baked them in the oven and fried bacon and made coffee. My sister and I would look down at him from our top berth and watch him put

the materials together for the corn cake: water, salt, soda and sorghum, then enough white meal to make a thin batter, that was his recipe.

When father built the mud chimney, we discarded the "tin stove" as we called it, and mother did all the cooking and made such sweet bread and baked it in the bake kettle in the hot ashes and coals.

We were not unhappy. There were so many things to amuse us, and we like all members of the "Yankee Tribe," were determined to see and know everything that was going on around us.

We soon learned that there were more ways than one in the world, and we eagerly tried every new thing. Father and the boys made excursions into the interior and found farms and brought home huge pumpkins, and doing as others did, set crotched stakes in the ground and slung a pole across, put on a big kettle and cooked the pumpkin all day out of doors. We children watching and feeding the fire. We would put in some sorghum to sweeten it a little, and some allspice to season it a little too, and using a long paddle to keep it from burning stirred it until it was done, and seeing we had such a scant variety of food, this pumpkin sauce was not so bad after all.

Father was a man of resources and never had to stick to one job "for aye." When axe helves were a little slow in going off and coal burning was waiting for fresh wood to begin anew, he would fish in the Missouri river, and fishing was a passion with him. I think he liked to fish a little better than anything else.

But the method of taking fish from the Missouri was

so different from that of the St. Lawrence, it was like beginning and learning all over new how to fish.

We children went with father away back from the river to an old cotton field, where the cotton had not matured perfectly and the year's growth was still ungathered being worthless for market, and we gathered quantities for fish bait. Father would take meal and pour hot water over it thus forming an uncooked mush, then he would work the cotton in to make it hold together, then scented it with anise or asafetida, then roll it into balls. He fastened short lines hooked and baited with these balls to a long rope called a night-line; this line he anchored in the river and caught more fish than we could use, so one day he took some to the city and found such a ready market for them, that from that day he fished as much as he worked, and it was more profitable too.

The two principal kinds of fish were buffalo and catfish. The buffalo resemble our northern whitefish, and the catfish were like any other catfish only very large, much larger than any we had ever seen before. There was an abundance of soft shell turtles, very saleable, and sometimes mother cooked them, but I did not enjoy them. I had such a horror of reptiles I could not even eat turtle. Of course the fishing was done in the spring and summer. It was late autumn when we arrived there, and winter was to come, and everything was at its worst; but we were to stay, and summer would bring us something new.

There was an abundance of small game, ducks, geese,—I have seen them by the thousand on the sand

shoals of the old Missouri—prairie chickens, turkeys, and squirrels, great large fox squirrels—we had some game nearly all the time.

Mother was always a good cook and when the neighbors stuck to the straight corn pone, bacon and black coffee, she changed our bill of fare all she could. We had one great advantage in living as we did, there was no house to keep and nothing to do but cook, eat, and sight see, and that was not a small part by any means—the sight-seeing was something wonderful to our northern eyes. I never saw but one horse while we were in Missouri, and that was owned by a government detective who soon found us—for while at the north we were not important at all—we here found ourselves of vast importance to several persons who like ourselves were for the first time in such a country and among such a strange people. This detective came to see us often, and talk over the queer doings and still queerer sayings of the "poor whites" around us, and many a time he took me up on the big horse before him, and holding me, cantered off around the place. Mules and oxen and occasionally a cow hitched in, were the beasts of burden then.

There was a young doctor from Vermont trying his fortune in the sunny South, and he had struck City Point about the same time we did and he soon found us. Vermont and New York are near neighbors when one is far from home. This young doctor would come to our cabin and sit on a stool father had made from a shake by boring holes and putting in legs, and tell us his experiences with the natives, and we

would tell ours. All the females smoked a pipe, and many of them chewed too, and they could hit a crack in the floor or in a log as straight as the best spitter among the men, and at as long range too. Dr. Millan said he was called to see one female, and she told him she had gone to the creek to "tote" a bucket of water and "cotched a heap of cold." He asked to see her tongue, and there was a great chew of tobacco lying on one side of her mouth. The doctor told her to put out the quid and she would get well. Oh how merrily the young doctor would get off their queer speeches, many of which could not be recorded here, we laughing with him many times until the tears would roll down our cheeks.

Mother's friends in Leavenworth came to see us, and we went there and found them quite rich people, and they proved good friends to us when we needed friends, which we did all in good time.

Of course there were negroes everywhere, and they were really more enterprising than the "white trash," as they called the natives. Their cabins better furnished and their food better prepared and of better material too. The first pair of kid shoes I ever owned were given me by a negro woman at City Point. She had had several pair of half worn ones given her by some white friends in the city, and one pair fitted me and I begged mother to buy them for me, but she would not indulge in such finery even though it was second hand, and the black woman seeing how disappointed I was gave me the shoes. I felt very proud of them, and have kept a warm place in my heart for

this kind act to a child who was nothing to her. She understood disappointment the keenest the human heart can know, for she had been bought and sold many a time, and hope had died out of her life only to be renewed again and again until finally through the greatest struggle any nation had ever known, she and her kind had been freed. She was a grateful woman and could not say enough in praise of the Union soldiers and " Massa Lincoln."

There was a farmer named Mr. Henry—so we called him—the natives called him " old man Henry," living about two miles from City Point. We got acquainted with them and Mrs. Henry came to see mother many times. She always came on the back of a tiny mule. She was a very large woman weighing perhaps two hundred and fifty pounds, and when she was on the mule's back one could see only its head and tail. We always thought her a queer object when on the mule's back, for he was not much larger than a young calf. But he made up in strength what he lacked in size, and carried his burden in safety.

We used to go to their farm often, for they were genial people and had no children to share the good things they seemed to always have on hand when we went there.

The house was a double log one—a room at each end and an open space in the center where the family had meals in the warm weather.

Mr. Henry always wanted me to play checkers with him, and he would get the board and we would sit by the old mud chimney and play, and I could beat him

every time. I thought at that time that the reason I beat all the time was because I was a Yankee and smarter than the dull farmer of the South. I think now perhaps he let me beat out of courtesy, for the southern people are very courteous when they take a liking to one, and the Henrys like "You'uns," as they called us. They never said you and we. They said "You'ns" and "We uns."

There were cottonwood trees—and the second growth of this timber is a pretty sight, the trees when young are light colored and look some like poplars, the bark is smooth and the trees are so tall and straight they looked very quaint growing on the bank of the slough on the road to Mr. Henry's house, and when I think of the people I always see the grove of second growth cottonwood trees, the slough and island across and the path we followed up the bank to their house. I always had a feeling that I was in an enchanted land when passing through the grove of tall, weird young cottonwoods.

The woods were literally full of rabbits. Seth caught some and I tamed two, and they would creep into my sleeve and lie there contented and happy.

Then there were the opossums. The first one I ever saw father brought home "dead as a smelt." He told us of its peculiar habits, and we all retired for the night and left him lying dead on the floor. The fire was burning cheerfully in the old mud chimney, thirteen pairs of eager eyes were keeping watch, and when everything was quiet and the opossum thought us all gone he lifted up his head and looked around, and see-

ing no one, made toward the door, but father called out and he dropped dead again. This was tried several times just to show us the way the opossum has of cheating man, especially black man. I have a suspicion that I have read or heard somewhere that negroes like opossum and chickens both, and can scarcely tell which is the better. When they are eating opossum they say that is "best," but when the chicken is done to a turn they are nearly out of their wits to tell which is "best." I have tried both and pronounce them both very toothsome. Perhaps it was the keen hunger of childhood that made me enjoy the opossum, and again perhaps it was mother's way of frying it down in the skillet until it was a golden brown. Anyway the opossum makes very good eating when properly served.

The woods fairly swarmed with hogs, one came upon them any time and in any place.

There were so many and no one seemed to know who owned them, and one day when we were tramping in the woods Seth decided to catch a young pig and take it home and have mother cook it whole. Of course he had no trouble in catching the pig, but when it began to squeal its mother rushed at Seth, and he shinned up a tree and we dashed off for home.

The old hog sat there and watched him a long time, thinking probably that he would come down and she could teach him a little lesson in manners.

We had not known before that hogs had such love for their offspring, and from that on passed them quietly by, paying them due respect.

The woods were full of northern song birds and robins hopped about our door just as they had in the old home.

I decided to make a collection of eggs in the summer, but when summer came the birds had flown, that is, the kind we had been familiar with all our lives.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PEOPLE

THE people! the primitive inhabitants of City Point! I could never describe them. It would take the pen of a Dickens or a Hugo to do them half justice. How such a class of people were ever evolved on American soil has remained a mystery to me.

The day of our arrival at City Point mother took us into a cabin where a family of "poor whites" lived, to wait till father got our little stove set up. It was getting late in the season and the air was some cool and our house built of green lumber, and a fire must be built somewhere before we could go inside, so mother took us into this cabin.

It was a very small abode and had no windows, and the woman closed the door as soon as we got inside, and we filled the cabin pretty full. We drew up to the cheerful fire which was blazing away in the old mud chimney, it being the only light thing or place we could see.

We did not sit down. There were not seats for all, so we stood up and looked at the woman and her two children—girls—who resembled their mother in form and complexion—all three having neither—that is as well as I can describe nothing to say that it does not exist.

The woman was tall and big and bloated—at least she looked that way—and stood with one fist on her hip and the other one was attending to a pipe which she never removed from her mouth only when it was necessary for her to eject the surplus secretion from the salivary glands. Her name was Hall. Her husband was called "Old Man Hall," and she "the Old Woman Hall," this was the way the natives called every married man and woman.

Mother began asking this woman questions, and got some queer answers but very little information. Mother asked first how long she had lived at City Point, and the woman replied "a right smart," and mother said "a right smart," why how long is "a right smart"? and the woman took her pipe from her mouth and said, "don't you uns know?" and mother said "No, I don't," and the woman looked strangely at mother as though questioning her word, and then fired a volley of spittle at the fire and said, "Why a right smart is a right smart, I recon," then replaced the pipe and began drawing away as though the question was settled. Anything that was so simple as that people should know without asking questions.

Then mother asked where they came from, and the woman replied promptly, "Arkansaw," and mother asked how they got here and she said, "We uns just run for our lives and kept on running until we uns landed here," and mother said, why did you run? and the woman said, "the soldier," and mother said "What soldier," and the woman said, "oh, just the soldier. I don't know what soldier, but we

uns had to run for our lives," and that was all the poor creature knew of why they had fled from their home and why they had settled at City Point. Mother asked next what they lived on in this queer place, and she brightened up and said, "Corn pone, dodgers, and coffee and bacon and coon and rabbits when we uns can get them." Mother wanted to know, of course, what a pone was, and the woman could not tell. We found out afterwards that it was a loaf; and the next question, "what are dodgers?" and for answer the woman showed some little flat meal cakes made of white meal, salt and water. They were formed into cakes by the hand, and the shape was like a cake would be if it fitted the hands when put palms together. She broke up several and gave us some to eat, and really they were sweeter than any corn bread we had ever eaten. But we were destined to get dodgers enough before that winter ended. We were thirsty and the woman brought water in what she called a bucket, and gave us a drink from a dipper made by scraping out a long stemmed gourd. She said they "toted" the water from the "sloō," and mother said, "What does 'tote' mean, some peculiar way of carrying water?" and the woman spit into the fire again—as though it was a relief to her feelings—and said, "You uns don't know much, I recon," and mother began to think that if that sort of thing kept on she was likely to remain in ignorance, for asking questions did not bring information.

Father came to tell us our stove was set up, and we took our departure. The woman looked relieved to

see us go, and on mother's face was that set look as much as to say: I will find out all about the woman and her family too. There must be some way of finding out, and I shall know.

We learned all their peculiar phraseology in time, and found that "a right smart" might mean anything according to what it was applied to, three months, ten years, four rods, six miles. In fact it was like some of the slang phrases of to-day, it could mean anything, according to the mood of the speaker.

"Old man Gan" and his "old woman," and "old man Maning," lived in another little cabin on the opposite side from us, and they were queer specimens of the *genus homo*. All they knew of their past history was that they had lived in "Arkansaw" before the war, and they had run for their lives when the soldiers came, and now they were settled at City Point.

Their cabin was very small, and when the weather permitted they lived entirely out of doors. They set crotched poles in the ground, slung a pole across and hung on the kettle, if the food was to be boiled, or used the skillet and sauce pan if it were to be fried, then sat around the fire on their haunches and watched things cook and beguiled the time by smoking their pipes.

"Old man Gan" was a hunter and trapper. He hunted small game, and his "old woman" could fry it down such a golden brown that we children enjoyed hanging around their fire, for we picked up many a toothsome "tid bit" in that way.

The old man was something of a Chinese in his

hunting. "Everything was fish that came to his net," and he trapped skunks, dressed and ate them just as he did opossums and coons.

Once when I was hanging around their fire the old woman gave me a hot biscuit, and large piece of meat. I ate them with the hungry appetite of childhood, and pronounced them very delicious, especially the pure white meat—like chicken breast—perfectly cooked, a rich, golden brown outside, and "old woman" Gan laughed heartily and said, "Skunk, child! skunk," and sure enough it was. The old man had trapped six large ones, and dragged them to his hut and hung them up by their heads—we wondering what a man could do with such awful things. It was meat for his family sure enough. Well that night there was an awful commotion in the vicinity of "old man Gan's," and the loudest smell that ever floated over a community began radiating from that point, and soon a tumult began, and our door was quietly pushed open and Seth stepped inside and mounted to the peak where he slept nights, and then we knew that he had been up to some of his tricks. He had gone and with a long pole had stirred up the skunks, and set a wave to vibrating that aroused the inhabitants of the hut and the whole community. "Old man Gan" swore by all the gods he knew that if he knew the "peskey galoot" who had prowled around his hut meddling with his store of provision he would shoot him sure. Well he did not find out, and the next day I had some of the meat, never once thinking that I was eating skunk until she told me.

"Old man Gan" and his "old woman" quarreled frequently. She drank whiskey when she could get it, and it kept them in a turmoil nearly all the time. She would step up to him—a very tall, thin man—she very short—and strike her fist up toward his face and call him frightful names. Finally they parted, and she went away, then he sold the cabin to four young men who came to live there during the winter. But they were children, undeveloped children, and made up their foolish quarrel and were living together again in a very short time but in the cabin where the cotton-wood tree trunk formed one side to the hut. We knew these people, and got used to their mode of living, for they were at City Point as long as we remained, as you will see further on.

Old man Newton had several children. His eldest son was married and had a family of five. I think as a rule the Southern people do not have large families, at least those at City Point at that time did not. "Old man Newton" had the largest family there, and he had six children, nearly all of them grown up, and the women were big, bloated females, all smoked and one went around with two revolvers strapped to her waist. Another big bloated female in this family was lame, and walked with a crutch. She had been married, but did not know what had become of her "man." Miles, a youth of eighteen or nineteen, had been married too, but had got lost away from his "woman" when they fled from Arkansaw, and did not "look" to see her again, and if there was any other woman in want of a "man," why he was to be had for the asking. The

Newtons had the least of any family at City Point, and all could work, and we did not see why they were so poor. They did not have an earthen dish in their hut. I have seen them eating many times, their only food fish and dodgers, both laid on the table—a rough board affair—and not a dish nor knife or fork, all eating with their fingers.

They had a pet pig and it occupied as honored a position in the household as any member, and slept under a bunk which the two young women used as a sleeping apartment. It followed them around like a dog, and frequently when it was tired they took it up and carried it in their arms.

This family was by far the worst type of humanity I ever saw. They had nothing and knew less. The "old man" was very large, and had big bushy whiskers and a voice like the roar of distant thunder. Frequently they quarreled and fought, and it would be announced to the neighbors by the "old man" running out of doors and swinging a huge stick around his head and roaring like an enraged beast. He cried that he would shoot, kill, stab or murder some one; but he never did kill any one, though we children felt sure that someone would die of fright at the awful roar of his voice.

The four young men who bought out "Old Man Gan" came there with a big mule team, and brought their whole worldly goods along with them. Soon they discovered the Newtons there too, or at least the "Old Man Newton" discovered them, and it was announced to the community by the most terrible roaring and

threatening ever heard; one of these same young men was the man who had at some time in the past married and deserted the lame daughter of this enraged sire. The young man pacified him by going to his cabin and claiming the lame girl as his wife, and took her to his own cabin to cook his corn cakes and bacon, and peace was restored. That made five individuals living in a hut twelve feet square.

Levi Johnson was the name of another young man in this gang. He soon discovered a young girl named Lizzie Hall and made love to her, and soon persuaded her to marry him. My married sister went to the city with this couple and was a witness to their marriage, and it was performed in a church too.

Not long after mother saw Lizzie outside her cabin sitting on a log crying as though her heart was broken, and mother asked her what the matter was and she said: "Levi went to the city to-day and didn't bring me a pretty," and mother said what is a pretty? And she sobbed out, "Why it's a pretty." That was the beginning of woe to that poor young wife.

These people had never heard of Christmas and we children could not understand how any child could live in the world and not know Christmas. We explained it as best we could, and told how we hung up our stockings and "Santa Claus" came and put in presents. We further explained that our parents were the ones who got the presents and "Santa Claus" did the putting in.

Then young John Hall—Lizzie and John belonged to another family by that name from the one we first

saw when coming to City Point, said if we children, his cousins and ourselves, would help him load his big ox wagon with chips he would go over to the city and sell them and get us some "pretties," then we knew what a "pretty" meant, "a present large or small," just a little token that showed that one had been remembered and was loved. Then we knew why Lizzie cried. She thought Levi was forgetting her, and she was only a child, a poor, ignorant, undeveloped child, and would never be anything else. We worked faithfully and filled the wagon, and John went to the city, sold the chips, and brought me for my "pretty" a big candy heart. It cost seventy-five cents. I had it several years. Though I suspicioned that I got the prettiest "pretty" in the "bunch" there was no need to tell young John that he had given me the best. He wanted me to have it and so gave it to me. Perhaps a bit of his heart was in the gift, but I was too young at that time to know or care much about hearts other than candy ones.

These people, the refugees from Arkansaw, the original founder of City Point, Missouri, were all alike, and what I have said of one could stand for all. Most of them could play the Jews harp and would stand around on one foot or lean against a post and play the Arkansaw Traveler for hours together. They could neither read nor write, and did not have the least idea of distance, and said places were "So many looks and a right smart" distant. They were poor, awfully poor, so poor they did not know how poverty stricken they were. They had no possession and never

had had anything in the way of possession, and knew not their value. They had poverty of spirit, too, the greatest poverty any human being can possess, and they had that in its fullest sense.

The men all carried revolvers and knives, and none of them were afraid to shoot or stab. In those days just after the Civil War when men were steeped in blood, a man or two less were not worth counting, and blood-letting has been considered, by some, as good for the system.

If you doubt my statement in regard to the shooting and blood-letting, just read the history of the south during that sad and awful time. Study it now and see how much it has improved as regards those practices.

When winter set in it lasted about six weeks. There were several flurries of snow, but the morning sun dispelled it before noon. The worst feature of the winter was a piercing wind which blew from the prairies of Kansas just across the river. This wind seemed so thin and cutting it almost pierced to the bone. But we children sat around the mud chimney most of the time during that short winter and talked over the strange things we had seen on the journey, the still stranger place where we were and wondered if we would ever see the dear old home again.

But that short winter drew to a close and spring began to put in his appearance, and something queer began to happen to old Missouri too. We had not given that stream much thought as yet. We had known the grand St. Lawrence and cared very little

for this stream of mud that rolled past. The river is a strange one. The bottom is quicksand and keeps moving all the time. Sometimes we would see a long sand bar out in mid stream as though an island were forming: the next day it would all be gone. But now the water began to rise higher and higher, and soon the banks of the slough were filled and a rushing torrent swept along where only a tiny stream had been, and old Missouri rolled past, a mighty stream tumbling and pitching its mud billows about in a way to strike terror to stout hearts.

The four young men hitched up the mule team, gathered their effects together and loaded the big wagon, and started off just as they had come leaving the woman and young wife. Poor Lizzie cried and in her pleading said if Levi would take her she would never cry for a pretty again. But Levi was obdurate and went right off. She followed him to the big flat-bottomed boat, my married sister went with her, feeling a woman's sympathy for the poor deserted wife. Levi had driven the mules and wagon on the boat, and he told the captain he did not want Lizzie, and some deckhands put her off carrying her by main force. My sister assisted the poor young thing to her mother's cabin, and Helen Newton hobbled home on her crutch. She had been treated thus before and took it stoically. She never saw her "man" again, and probably Lizzie never saw her husband either.

The old Missouri kept on rising, and the whole bottom land was flooded. It would have been a good thing for us if we had taken warning and fled when

the young men did. But we did not understand what grim monster lurked in the filthy deposit from the mad mud torrent.

Father had built our house on a rise of ground and the water never reached the door, but it was all round us. During the wet time we children walked on stilts and visited the "poor whites." They were amazed to see us walking on sticks. They were just as amused at our queer doings as we were at theirs—if a poor white can be amused.

After a time, I can't remember how long, the water went down and left little pools in every hollow. The slashing of timber during the winter had left much cotton-wood bark on the ground, and the gumbo clay kept the water from soaking into the ground, and soon the warm sun began to shine and the pools were covered with a green blanket of scum. This gave us no uneasy feeling, for spring had burst upon us with bud, leaf and bloom. The sun shone brightly, the song birds took their departure for the north, all that had come south for the winter, and we fairly reveled in the lap of nature.

Father and the boys rolled the logs off from two acres and fenced it in with the logs, and mother and we children planted seeds of all kinds, corn, potatoes, lettuce, peas, beans, and father set sweet potato vines, and we were to understand quite forcibly the significance of the rhyme "grasshopper sat on a sweet potato vine" before that summer should go by.

Father purchased a cow and we had plenty of milk

for nothing, for she could get her living anywhere on the bottom land.

My brother-in-law had earned a goodly sum of money, and he and my sister set up housekeeping for themselves in a cabin on the bank of the slough.

Father set poles in the ground in the front and rear of our house, and built up rude porches on them. One we kept covered with green brush and used it to sit under, the other mother used as a "cook place."

It seems to me in looking back over that time that there were many things to make a child's life happy. There was a constant stream of boats going up and down the river all the time, but they were the most peculiar craft we had ever seen. They were tall and flat-bottomed. Sometimes the wheel would be a great large one extending the entire height of the stern of the boat. Again they would be side wheelers, no propellers such as we had seen on the journey on the Great Lakes. The river bottom changed so often that navigators could not keep track of the channel, and the boats had to be so they could run anywhere in shallow water.

The great city was right in sight and we went there many times. Father had two boats, and it was not half the trouble to cross the Missouri it had been to cross the St. Lawrence.

The woods fairly blazed with bloom. The wild roses were very beautiful and we were never tired of gathering them, and we, after the fashion of children, were happy.

CHAPTER XX

FURTHER EXPERIENCES

THE schools and churches of City Point at that time were exactly like everything else around the place, of the most primitive style. So primitive that the schoolhouse and church were conspicuous by their absence. But school was kept in a tiny cabin in the town, and "meetings" held in another one away back from the bottom land two miles. I started to attend school and went one week then stopped, for the tuition was six shillings a week and mother thought that too much to pay for education.

The teacher true to everything in her surroundings had to be queer too. She was a little young woman and had no nose, and it made her look so funny that I could not keep my eyes on my book, but kept watching her and trying to find out how she became noseless. Patt Carr's nose had been eaten out by a cancer, but she did not look a bit like Patt Carr. There had never been anything the matter with her nose, for she had been born queer, and her queerness was, that she had no nose. I did not dare ask her how she became noseless, and speculate as hard as I could, I could but decide that poor Miss Emma had been born as she was, just as other mortals are born as they are. I used to think at that time that perhaps it had all happened

because she had been born in such a queer place, and things had to be true to their environment, and was glad I had been favored by being born in the beautiful north where things were not queer.

What strange fancies we get in youth. I went several times to the "meetings," but they seemed even more queer than the school and noseless teacher. The minister was a large man and seemed to have ideas which he tried to explain to the people, and he did it in a loud pompous style as though noise and gesture had more real weight than sound argument.

If he had sound argument I cannot remember what it was, for the queer congregation took my whole attention. Nearly all of the females were big and wore sunbonnets and aprons, and divided their attention between the minister and us. A part of the time I felt that I was being looked straight through and grew confused, and turned around and seemed very intent on the "meeting," but curiosity would get the better of my judgment and I looked again at the people. The men looked even more funny than the women, and had big bushy whiskers and unkempt hair. They seemed to be in a sort of undress dress wearing neither shoes nor coats, and sat on a bench and faced the minister though their bodies were all humped up and shaken together in a heap. They came with their guns on their shoulders and sat with them by their sides during the "meeting."

I was now in my twelfth year, just at the age when lasting impressions on mind and character are made, and these things were stamped indelibly, and when

I view the pictures on the walls of my childhood's memory, my life at City Point stands out in bold relief, almost eclipsing every other picture.

Not being in school and having no books to read, we had to do something to amuse ourselves, so we just run wild in the woods and wandered all over the bottom land and away back from the bottom land miles and miles up and down. Of course we came upon snakes very frequently, spotted adders, black snakes, rattlers—we had fourteen rattles taken from one of that kind—and swifts were there by the thousand—snakes on legs we called them. They were spryer than chain lightning. No one could strike one with a stick. The only way I ever knew of one's being killed was once one ran under a piece of bark, and Seth smashed the bark and killed the swift too.

We wore our stout shoes when on these excursions, for there was no knowing what one might run on to, for there were living things of all kinds belonging to the creeping and crawling tribes.

In the evening fireflies and glow worms flitted past or lighted up thus announcing their whereabouts, and "katy-dids" kept telling us that "katy-did, katy-did." And the mosquitoes and gallinippers (a huge mosquito) sung their peculiar song and thus gave warning of approaching enemies. We kept a smudge and fought mosquitoes too. A gallinipper can bite terribly, and one is as large as several mosquitoes. We had been told that the mosquitoes in the south were so large that many of them would weigh a pound, and when we saw the gallinipper we thought it would not take very

many either. In the daytime we could hear the turtle dove's plaintive note, and while roaming in the woods frequently saw the beautiful mountain oriole flitting from tree to tree. Nature was lavish in her display and sometimes gorgeous in her coloring. I have never in my small wanderings met with such a display of fauna and flora as in the bottom lands of the old Missouri. The wild roses were the most magnificent ones I ever saw, and there were immense quantities of them.

We gathered gooseberries and sold them in the city for a dollar a large pail, and there were bushels and bushels of them. We wondered why the natives did not gather and sell them, but they never did anything like that. To us it did not seem like selling berries. Over in the city the people wanted everything of this kind they could get, and paid such a good price it did seem a real pleasure to offer them for sale.

The mulberries came later, and they were the nicest berries to gather we had ever found. A mulberry tree looks something like a second growth maple, and the fruit when ripe resembles long blackberries. We would take some sheets and pails and go into the woods and find a tree, then spread the sheets on the ground, and Seth, who was good at climbing, would go up and shake the berries off. We then lifted the sheets and carefully shook the berries into the pail. It was fun to pick berries that way, and the pail filled so fast; every pail full meant one dollar to us. Then the early Fox grapes came and there was a ready market for them, and we begun to think we had found

the "Garden of Eden." The water in the slough went down so we could walk over to the island, and there the grapes grew in great abundance. We were delighted to gather them they were so sweet, and we of the north had never had fruit in such abundance, and we fairly reveled in it.

We found wild plums as large as any tame ones I have ever seen, and they were so sweet, ripening as they did under that southern sun.

Our garden was the finest one we had ever raised, and we had vegetables of all kinds, more than we could use. Everything found a ready sale in the market though, and it was no trouble for father to row us over. We children were delighted to go to market. It was such a wonderful place to us. A place where one could buy anything needed in a family from a pinch of sauerkraut to a whole ox.

We had a flock of chickens, and they laid an abundance of eggs. One hen hatched four broods of chickens, and it seemed that she laid eggs all the time too. I had two pet pullets, one yellow and the other pure white, and they were so fond of me that they would come at my call and sit on my shoulders and nestle against my neck.

Early in the spring my eldest brother got a puppy and raised and trained him to bring birds from the water. He was very fond of the dog, and when the little fellow would get tired from the long rambles my brother would carry him, and many a time I have seen them coming home the dog in his arms. When we left Leavenworth this dear dog was sitting on the bank of

the river looking off down stream, and our hearts were sore to leave him thus. But we were leaving so much that another tear did not matter, and we let the tear fall and did not try to attract his attention for fear that he too would mourn for us, for dogs do mourn.

Already a dark cloud had risen on our horizon. In the spring my sister Puss was very sick with fever a long time. Then another little sister was taken with brain fever and lay ill a long time, and later we began tc have some ague.

The cotton-wood bark was rotting in the pools left from the overflow in the spring, and these pools became very stagnant and gave off an offensive odor, and the evening air was filled with miasma. Then my sister's husband was taken with the fever and mother began to worry, but was told that northern people always had to go through just so much sickness before they were acclimated.

My sister's husband was ill a long time, but finally began to get better, and we thought perhaps it would all come out right at last. We had made so much money that we began to think that we would all get rich if we could only get well and keep so.

Already my eldest brother talked of going in the autumn down among the Cherokee and Delaware Indians, where there were rich lands to be had and money to be made.

We had gotten the spirit of adventure stirred and kept on thinking of change and bettering our condition.

There was another member in our family that de-

serves special notice. Young Edward Walace. My eldest brother found him one day in the woods in the early spring when he was duck shooting and brought him home to mother. He was about twenty-seven years old, tall and well formed, had brown hair and those innocent childlike blue eyes, which always go straight to the heart of a mother. He wore the Army blue and had a frightful scar on both sides of his shoulder where the Rebel bullet had gone straight through. He, too, had fought and bled for his country's cause, and when he was sent home discharged from a hospital, he entered into an affair of the heart that proved his undoing. Love and war have played some queer pranks with the destinies of men.

Young Edward became enamored of a woman, who, by the way, must have been a vain flirt, heartless and cruel. They were married on short acquaintance, and she, when she found that he was not rich in this world's goods, refused to live with him and went home to her father. He had a charming manner, and I suppose he dressed well and thus attracted her attention. He was taking a college course before the war and left that unfinished to serve his country, and when the war was ended went back to finish his course and met the woman who proved his undoing. When she returned to her father's roof he left his native state penniless and on foot, not caring what became of him, and wandered away down into Missouri where my brother found him.

It was spring and fruits and edibles, which he could have found in abundance later in the season, were all

hidden in the bosom of old mother nature, and the poor boy, for so he seemed, a beardless youth, had not eaten anything for days. He was with us, a member of our family, four months, and each day endeared him to us. He entered into the life of our family as though he belonged to it. Called our parents father and mother, and he and my eldest brother were inseparable. They slept in the same bed, and worked together at the same work. His one and only fault that we could find was his extreme vanity. I never saw anything like it before or since in a man. He carried a glass, and never took off or put on his hat without having recourse to the glass. But for all his vanity he was a true noble gentleman, and we loved him like a brother.

After his death my father wrote his parents the particulars and sent to them his little belongings, excepting the "housewife" he carried through the war, that is in our family still.

The young wife became a mother, and through the affidavits of my parents secured a pension for herself and child. So in a small way she was recompensed, but I have always felt that she was not deserving of that. But I will do her this justice. I never heard her side of the story.

On the Fourth of July, Edward and my eldest brother took Puss and me to Leavenworth to see the celebration, and we went into a restaurant for the first time and ate ice cream.

Oh, my how hot the weather got and we could not step on the ground barefooted. It seemed to us that the world would all burn up. We had never seen

such hot days, but the nights were cool and we could sleep comfortably.

My sister's husband was getting better, and in a few days would be able to walk to our house.

July passed away and August set in, and something strange began to happen. Clouds began to darken the sky and no clouds could be seen, and someone suggested grasshoppers, but we only laughed at grasshoppers coming down in clouds. Our garden was grand, and the corn was so high that it actually hid the house on the side where the corn grew. We had melons larger than we children could lift, and they were sweeter than any melons we had ever tasted before.

Seasons are much earlier in the south than the north, and at this time things were well grown. Well, the grasshoppers, for that was what the clouds were, began to come down gently like living flakes, and they were very large and hungry too and began eating everything before them.

Of course we worried about the garden, but there was no use in worrying, the grasshoppers kept coming in clouds. The whole world seemed literally full of them, and the corn was stripped and soon there was scarcely a green thing left. The devastation was not complete, for the vegetables were so well grown they could only eat what green leaves there were. The corn stood like a small forest, all shorn of its leaves, and the tall stalks standing out in bold relief presented a picture of what could be accomplished by hungry insects.

We were discouraged and mother and my eldest brother decided that we had found a bad place. All had seemed so fair, in fact too fair to last, and now with fever and ague and grasshoppers the south was very different from the north.

My sister's husband was slowly improving, and one day walked as far as to our house; but he could not walk alone and came leaning on her arm. I can look back and see them coming up the path, she so young, not nineteen years old, he so emaciated with fever and so feeble he could not walk without her help, and slowly they walked along under that burning sun.

In the spring when we began cooking out of doors entirely, and did not use the little house for anything but to sleep in, father purchased a bedstead, and that was there in the room taking up most of the inside space. Then father made a little trundlebed for the small children to sleep in, and during the daytime it was shoved away under mother's bed. I often wonder, when I look back, how we ever lived at all. So many of us and not used to such small quarters and had always had an abundance of pure fresh air.

Well mother's bed was made ready for the feeble man and he lay down to rest. This was Tuesday morning and at night he was still so weary he could not walk home, and they both remained for the night. Soon they discovered that his fever was rising and knew that he had overdone his small strength, and had a relapse.

Wednesday morning my sister was taken with the hardest chill she had ever had, in fact she had been

quite well during our stay there only for an occasional chill, so the little trundlebed was left out and on it she lay all that day, and was so sick and delirious she did not know anybody for hours—the young husband worse of course.

At night her ague being gone and our house so small and crowded, mother told her to take Seth and me and go home for the night, and come again in the morning—she was not able to sit by her husband after such a day of suffering anyhow.

Then there was a family council held and the situation talked over, and they decided that as soon as the sick man was well enough to go they would get away from that awful place. They knew by this time that the bottom lands of the old Missouri was no place for northern people.

There was something so strange about those southern chills. While they lasted one was sick enough to die, but when they were over and the fever gone, one took quinine and thought perhaps they would not return. But return they did and they were hard on northern people. I have seen the natives start to Leavenworth with a load of wood and get to City Point, unhitch their mules and tie them up somewhere, then lie down under their loaded wagon in the sun and have the chill, fever and sweat, then get up, hitch up the mules and go on as though nothing had happened.

But we began to understand why these people did not have any ambition. It took them all winter to get over the chills of summer.

CHAPTER XXI

OUR TRIAL

I WISH I could pass over this part of my narrative, but in justice to myself, I cannot. People say that I am queer. Well, I should think I would be. My life has had so many queer, strange things in it, it made me queer.

Dr. Holmes says, that a man's education should begin a hundred years before he is born. I feel that mine began several centuries before my advent into this life. My father's people though kind and good were strange, queer, superstitious people, and I true to nature and being born of that stock am queer too. My mother's people though severe in many ways and Puritanical in all ways, were the most queer, determined off-shoot from a queer, unique stock that ever existed, and I being born of this dual queerness inherited it in a two-fold sense, and again, the whole exvironment of my life has been queer and strange, and I could never have evolved anything from it all but something queer and strange, something entirely out of the natural, and so I am a queer person, a unique individual. But if I fulfil my mission in life, preserve my own true individuality and develop my soul, then I shall not have lived in vain. Soul development means so much, for that is the true purpose of life. But it

is uncomfortable to be pointed out as a queer person. Why not say, I do not understand that individual, I do not know the circumstances of birth and life that combined to evolve that unique expression of the All Father who has never made one thing in vain. But why philosophize on life. Emerson says to be great is to be misunderstood. Sometimes I feel greater than any book that was ever written; greater than any poem that was ever sung, and feel that nothing in life or death can harm me; for I am one with the Infinite, and all the strange, queer surroundings of my life were the very things needed to develop the highest my soul is capable of in earth life; but when I think of the awful tragedy that befell our simple family in that far-off southland, I wonder that any of us survived with mind enough left to pursue the common vocations of life. I wonder that I ever had ambition to go on and live and struggle to gain worldly goods and worldly fame. But there is so much of the Divine in the human after all, that we do not give up the struggle, only when the soul wings its flight to the great supreme first cause, and I do not know that we rest then, sometimes I think it will be a struggle through the cycles of eternity.

When our little sister was ill with brain fever, and we thought she could not recover, mother had cried out over and over again, Oh, I cannot bury one of my children so far from home, I cannot give her up to die in this far-off land. How little poor mother knew, how much she would one day leave there.

On the day my sister and her husband came to our

house on the visit which proved the last, Helen Newton, the lame girl, sickened and died in eight hours, that being the very first case of such a sickness we had ever known. We had heard of cholera, but never expected to see it, and not hearing the natives mention such a thing we did not know it existed, and were not looking for it there. Mother and "old woman Gan" were called in to this family and laid out the dead girl. The pet pig was under the bed where she died, and mother with her keen sense of decency and cleanliness put the pig out of doors.

As soon as Mrs. Gan got home to her cabin she took off her clothes and tossed them on top of her cabin to air, and mother asked her why she did it, and she said she had lived in the south always, and had seen two visitations of cholera in her time, and was sure that was the cause of Helen Newton's death.

All day Wednesday my sister was so sick with the ague and at night, she and her child, Seth and I went to her house, for our house was so crowded. She made a pallet on the floor for Seth. I was to sleep with her and the child. Then she filled her tatting shuttle with thread and sat by the door and started a bit of that lace. The shuttle is in my family still, just as she left it that night. The tiny bit of lace all discolored with time, but dear to us and we would not part with it for any amount of costly lace, then she came to bed and in the morning, at two o'clock, she was taken violently ill. The first I noticed it she would rise up to vomit, and that pulled the quilts from me, and I was cold. Soon she awoke Seth and he ran for

mother, and when she came she got me up and in that early morning, not quite dawn, I took the little child and went home and sent father. Seth was sent for our physician, who lived inland two miles. But they could not wait for that physician, and Edward and my eldest brother rowed over to the city and found and brought a physician from there, and he pronounced the disease cholera.

He had his method for treating disease, as all physicians do, and said her life depended entirely on heat. She must be got warm and not have any cold water to drink. With cholera the thirst is intolerable, and one can drink cold water all the time when not retching, and she begged for water all the time; but he gave her hot drink and put hot things about her; hot water in bottles and hot cloths, all to no purpose. God had summoned her, and at eight o'clock, after six hours of agony, she passed on, and she so young, not quite nineteen years old. This was Thursday, and Friday she was buried in a little cemetery called Greenwood, two miles away from the bottom land.

Father went to the city and purchased a casket for her; but there was no funeral cortége. Mother was prostrated, and lay on the little trundlebed, the sick young husband rapidly growing worse and the child cried piteously for its mother.

That same day young man Newton died and left his family of five. We heard a loud screaming and wailing, and knew what was the trouble, and soon found that he too was gone.

My eldest brother tried to comfort mother, but she

refused to be comforted, and Saturday morning she could not sit up, and he took down his gun and shot a chicken and told someone to make broth for her. That was his last act, something to comfort her. He had spent his young life in trying to help her, earning all he could and turning it over to her to use in the family, and seemed happy in doing for her; in helping to lighten her burdens which, with her large family, were heavy indeed.

He was taken ill so suddenly that he did not have time to hang the gun up on the pegs over the door where he kept it, and when mother saw him, her first born son in the clutch of that grim monster, cholera, she was possessed of strength and energy born of despair. She rose from the little trundlebed and made it ready for her stricken child. I cannot describe that awful day, though I was there all the time. The same physician came from the city. He used his same remedies, hot water and no cold.

The struggle was terrible, a strong young man not quite twenty, full of life and hope of long and good years to come, baffling with such a monster, and the monster prevailed, and just as the sun sank to rest behind the western hill tops, his young spirit took its flight into the great unknown, and mother fell on her knees in the open door and lifted up her hands to heaven and cried aloud in her agony. Her heart was broken over the loss of her first born son, and her reason nearly dethroned.

I shall never forget the awful scene, the dead boy on the trundlebed, the dying man on mother's bed,

the grasshoppers completely covering everything out of doors and mother's agony.

I remember I seemed to think only of her and wondered how she would live without him. She had depended on him more than on father, for he was young and such a good worker.

Now everything was changed. Our sun was set at high-noon, and the air was laden with death, and we all helpless victims not knowing which way to turn.

Would any of us be spared? We of the north were so much more liable to contagion.

The city authorities put a stop to people passing on the ferry, so no person from the plague stricken district could leave that way. But we could not have gone to the city if we had wanted to, and now must await our fate.

That night Puss and I were sent to sleep at the cabin of a "poor white" family. They lived right by our garden fence.

All that night father worked and made a box for the body of the loved one gone to the other side. There was no other way. He could not get to the city and carry out a casket unnoticed, and was obliged to do this sorrowful duty, though his heart break under the task. And mother wrapped the dear form in a white sheet, and together they laid him in this casket made by hands that had tended him since a helpless infant God had entrusted him to their care.

I think of them, father and mother, how they must have suffered through that awful night alone, but for Edward. He stood by them like a dutiful son.

When Puss and I came home in the morning the body lay on a bench by the door ready for its last resting place. I do not know much of the burial. I only know that a big ox wagon drawn by oxen came, and father, Seth and Edward were the only ones who followed to the cemetery, for as I entered the room I too was taken with the dread disease and again the little trundlebed was made ready, for another victim lay struggling in the clutch of the monster; the dying man on mother's bed now delirious and not conscious of our agony.

The others were not allowed water to drink, and the only want of the victim stricken with cholera is water, water. They beg for it all the time. Father decided to not send for any more doctors—who really kill more people than they cure—but use their own judgment, and if their children were to all die they at least could have all the water they wanted to drink.

Edward went to the bluffs of Kansas, just across the river, and brought fresh water from a spring there, and father gave me all I wanted, quarts and quarts of it. The last I remember the cramps were beginning to cease, and father sat by me giving me water from a bowl as fast as he could dip it up with a large spoon. I was unconscious for hours, and when I opened my eyes it was night and two strange men were in the room, and my sister Puss was there too, and the dying man on mother's bed still raving in his delirium.

Father had gone to mother where another child had been stricken, and that one too died. When mother saw that we were liable to all die there in a huddle, she took

some of the younger children and Edward to help her and went to my sister's now empty house, and there father went as soon as he saw that I was sleeping, and the strange men were watching the dying man even more than they were me, the child who had been saved from death in such a fearful form. And father thought my recovery due partly to the quantity of water I drank.

I shall hasten over some of these things for they were so terrible I can scarcely chronicle them.

Mother was still at my sister's house where another child had been taken with cholera, and was in an almost dying condition when Edward came in, his face and manner expressive of the deepest anguish, and mother cried out " What is it Edward," and he said " Cholera, I too have it," and mother tried to encourage him by telling him how he had seen the awful horrors of the war and not to give way under this, for fear sometimes hastens disease or brings it to our door. But he too was in the clutch of the plague and bravery was no barrier to keep it away.

His struggle was terrible, doubly terrible, for he had a heart trouble which now boldly came to the front and added another horror to the awful scene. All day mother alone tended him and her own child, rubbing his cramps, giving him water and fanning him too, for he could not breathe along with the rest of his sufferings. Once after she thought it all over and she had gone to her own child, he raised up and cried, " For the love of God give me air," then she returned to him and fanned him until he was rigid in death.

Father was at our house attending my sister's dying husband, and thought Edward well and helping mother. And he had had a touch of the plague himself and could scarcely sit up. That night two negroes came to mother and put Edward's body on a board which rested on two chairs just outside the door, then they went directly away fearing the plague, and mother alone watched that body all night to see that the hogs which ran at large around the bottom land did not come to tear it, and at two o'clock in the morning her own child died.

That poor mother ever had any mind at all after that tragic event is a mystery to me. My father told me years afterwards that she had never been the same that she was before, and no wonder.

Do you wonder where Seth was? He had run away. After I was taken, and he thought we all would die, he fled. He was young and panic-stricken. Two natives went in search of him and found him nine miles from City Point, and still going farther on. They brought him back and he stood by after that. I think he had ague some while we were in the south, but otherwise he was not sick at all and did not have even a touch of the cholera, and the two sisters who were sick with fever escaped too. All the rest had it, mother and all, and at the end of eighteen days there were seven graves side by side in Greenwood cemetery. Edward and my eldest brother lying side by side, and even in death they were not parted. My sister's husband died from the relapse of the fever, and her child went too. They are all there together an unbroken family.

And so they sleep peacefully waiting the judgment day when God shall raise them up and clothe them with immortal forms, which disease cannot ravage nor time destroy.

But how fared it with the natives? Many of them sickened and died too. Mrs. Gan died and later the "Old man" was found dead in his hut, and in his agony he had crept to the old mud chimney, where he had a fire to ward off disease, and his limbs were half burnt off when he was found. They all suffered, "Old man" Newton's two eldest "girls" went along with the married son. One man who had but two children kept them in a room and would not let them out to breathe the plague-stricken air; both sickened and died. Men who had no steady place of residence were found dead in all sorts of places.

I suppose in the history of City Point, the Asiatic cholera visitation of 1866 is chronicled.

The plague extended to the city of Leavenworth too, but things were different there, the land was higher, the water purer and the mortality not so great, but many deaths were reported daily for a long time.

Cholera is a strange disease. It is life or death in a few hours. And if one recovers properly they get about in a few days again. Another thing must be added; father made the boxes all except the casket for my eldest sister, and he and mother wrapped the forms of their loved ones in sheets and placed them in the boxes, and father drove the nails into the covers that shut out from their eyes the images of their children now dead and gone. Of course the natives were

afflicted just as we were and could not help, and the negroes would not. Of course mother's friends from the city came and brought and sent everything in their power. But this had to be done discreetly, for travel on the ferry was stopped. I remember a box of crackers they brought—we had no bread—and mother had sprinkled chloride of lime everywhere, and the smell of it got mixed up with those crackers and I could not eat them, and could not eat crackers for years after. They all smelt and tasted chloride of lime.

After my sister's husband died, about twelve days after her own death, the doctor who had attended our family all summer came to father and told him that if he did not get his family away from the plague-stricken district they would all die, and father understanding it fully sought and found a way for our escape. No one knows how much strength and endurance are in the human form until it be brought to the test and tried. Father had suffered in the twelve days following, my sister's death, enough pain mental and physical to kill a much stronger man, but still he rose to the needs of his suffering family, and escaping the eyes of the men set to guard the flight of plague-stricken people rowed to the city and secured a small one-room cottage, and there he took us in his own boat when no one knew that we were escaping, and there six days later my sister's child died. This brought on another complication, for they could not think of burying the child away from its mother. Seth was at City Point and had the boat there so he could row backward and forward, and thus

care for the household goods and assist mother and father too. And there being no way of getting word to him they decided to try the ferry. Persons could go to City Point but could not leave on the ferry, and mother decided on a course of action, that if successfully carried out would lay the child beside its mother. She wrapped the dead child in a shawl as though it were a living one, and taking it in her arms walked boldly to the ferry and stepped aboard, and took a seat as though there was nothing unusual in her mind and heart. When they got the dead child to the house father made a little box, and he and Seth strapped it to two poles and started to carry it to Greenwood two miles away, but were relieved of their burden by a kind-hearted native who was driving an ox team and wagon that way. He took them to the cemetery and stood by until their sorrowful burden was laid to rest. When they arrived at the cemetery they found that some one had buried a tiny child in their row and that completed the seven, and not wishing to separate the child from the mother, they opened her grave and laid the child on her bosom. This was just eighteen days from the first death in our family, and it completed the tragedy, for from that time on there were no more deaths. But the pain, the deep, dull, despair that comes with the loss of those nearest and dearest the human heart would not be quieted, and many years would pass away while the pain would eat at the vital life of those left.

The little cottage which we occupied while at Leavenworth City was in the extreme suburbs on the

south side. There was a spring, not far from our door, bubbling out of the bluffs, and we eagerly sought its pure, healing waters. Old Missouri glided by carrying its loads of mud and filth as usual, but we were not drinking its disease-laden water, and looked upon it with dread. Though it furnished us with food we could not love it, and shuddered at sight of it.

Father, though sick, still put out his line and caught fish, and sold them in the city to get money for our small needs.

We had decided to return to the old home as soon as we could get money and health enough for the long journey, and our stay at Leavenworth of two months, while we were making our preparations, was filled with many things.

Mother lay on the cot most of the time, dry-eyed and listless. She had not up to this time shed a tear since her first-born son had died, but quietly went through her trial after that with the mechanical motion of a machine. Father would say to Puss and me, "If mother could only cry it would relieve her." But the fountain of her tears was dry and she could not weep.

The extreme heat of summer had passed away, and it was delightful to wander over the bluffs and gather nuts. The nut-bearing trees were everywhere. One large black walnut tree stood by one of our doors, while a hickory one laden with its abundant harvest shaded the other, and though we were within the city limits prairie chickens roosted in those trees many a night.

The doctor said I must live out of doors if I ever

got well, and Seth, Puss and I wandered all over the surrounding country, and when too tired to walk farther would sit under a tree to rest, or draw near to some house and rest on the steps. Once I found myself on the doorstep of a tidy cottage, very neat and tidy, and the door being open I could see inside, and there I found something I shall never forget. In a large wooden rocking chair, filled with pillows of snowy whiteness, lay twin negro babies, and when their mother saw that I was interested in her children she invited me in and showed them to me. They were the funniest looking little things I ever saw, and I went often to look at the tiny bits of humanity who though black were Americans and free born.

There was a school of some kind near this cottage. The grounds were enclosed by a high fence, and I loved to loiter there and watch the pupils come and go, and my heart longed to be a student too. The thirst for knowledge has gnawed at my heart strings always, and if I let a day pass without doing something in the line of acquiring something though small or great, I am not quite content with the day.

Leavenworth at that time was the starting point for emigrant trains crossing the great plains, and we frequently saw those queer vehicles called prairie schooners. In fact there were many new and strange things of interest to children. But mother took no notice of anything and we could not arouse her out of her apathy.

One evening while we were sitting under the big tree by the door Seth said to me, "come little sister,

sing one of those songs you used to sing and gladden my heart," and I tried to lift up my voice in song but my voice refused to comply, and from that time on I could never sing.

CHAPTER XXII

BACK TO THE OLD HOME

So in the late autumn of 1866 just one year from the time we had left the dear old home we were to return. Our friends and relatives had sent us some money; father got some back pay from the government, and he sold the chickens, cow and sweet potatoes and got money enough together to defray the expense of the journey.

Mother and father had gone to City Point and washed and packed the bedding; mother giving a negro woman a feather bed and pair of pillows for helping get the things ready for the northward journey. Then mother and Seth went to Greenwood cemetery so mother could see where her children were resting. She not being able to go there before and father not strong enough for the walk. There were no vehicles other than heavy ox wagons, and going on foot was by far the easier way. I often think how weary she must have grown on the return; how long the way must have seemed to her, how heavy her feet; for she was leaving so much there that was dear to her, and still she shed no tear, and we began to think she would never weep again.

When all was ready we took a boat at the levee and started on the return trip.

We had been "A little journey in the great world," and like many another pilgrim were returning footsore and weary from the toilsome and dangerous way.

Oh, if poor people could only know when they are well off, and when they have a home stay there and not wander. It is well enough for the rich to journey, but from a sad and bitter experience I can truly say: the poor should stay at home.

"A contented mind is a continual feast," and the poor at home can have much that goes to make life beautiful. Nothing can satisfy the human heart but human love, and in the simplest cottage one can have the deepest, truest love of which the human heart is capable of and the great world cares nothing for the flotsam and jetsam cast adrift on the sea of humanity.

If one have the spirit of the living God within, and true abiding human love, they certainly have all the human heart can hope for. Earthly riches count for so little in the end, but love is the greatest thing in the world.

We quietly took our seats in the saloon of the great steamer, not caring to even look around. We were too sick and feeble, and rest was all we craved. We could not help seeing the thousand of wild geese on the sand shoals of old Missouri, and perhaps we would never see those scenes again, and we never have.

We took the train at Atchison and ran to St. Joseph, and from there on to Hannibal, and again crossed the Mississippi not caring for anything only that we were on the way north, and back to the old home. While crossing the prairies of Illinois we saw immense or-

chards of apples, but the train ran swiftly and we only occasionally saw things of interest. We were too sick and feeble to take much notice. We entered Chicago in the evening and thought the gas lights very pretty as they ran together away off at the extreme end of the point of sight.

The next morning father found one of the Northern Transportation boats in discharging her cargo, and it would take three days to be ready for the return trip, and the captain, after hearing father's story, let us go on board to save hotel bills.

I was approaching my twelfth year, and was at the age when children should know neither sorrow nor care. But I had been through things which from that time on, were to leave such an impression on mind and heart that my whole future life would be influenced thereby. I was to have no further childhood, no joyous girlhood, no happy young womanhood, and pleasure such as comes to the favored ones of earth, should have no place in my life. But from this time on I was to be a queer, strange woman, a thinker and thinking was to carve out my future destiny, which will not be written by me in this narrative. It may come at some future time but under an entirely different form, for it has no part in this.

So we were three days waiting, and while running around in the freight depot we found a crate of chickens and a large coffee mill. I should think the hopper would have held two quarts. It is strange that I should see that mill there and then see it again a year later and in such a different place, and that I should

turn the crank many a time and grind corn for our bread in that queer mill. Oh, what strange things come to us in life, and God only knows why.

The agent told us the chickens and mill and other goods in the same lot belonged to a man who would come on board at Milwaukee. The goods had been purchased in Chicago and were billed to G. H.

The man who owned the goods did come on board at Milwaukee, a tall, lank, unkempt man. He had been a soldier too, and had many yarns to spin. Among other things he told father of the land which had been opened to settlement under the homestead law. How he and his sons had preëmpted land there and he had been to Chicago to purchase goods, and was now on his way to the new land where he expected to make a fortune in a short time.

He said the timber was fine, and a man in father's circumstances could, in a short time, carve out a fortune for himself.

We had our tickets to Ogdensburgh, and mother would not listen to stopping. But the man left the boat at G. H. and we continued on our journey.

I wish we had never seen this man, our destiny would have been such a different thing. But if it be true, that there is a divinity that shapes our ends, then we were to meet the man and our future influenced by him. I shall have to stop here and let the tears cease to flow, for my heart is sad and heavy, the tears come unbidden and course down my cheeks like rain. I think of my blighted life, my joyless life, my life without hope, for through the influence of this

man I was made a prisoner for twenty-five long years in the most desolate place that could be found to bind a human soul in.

We journeyed alone the rest of the way, and mother lay on the little berth dry-eyed and listless. Nothing seemed to arouse her. Her interest in life seemed gone. We came to the Welland canal on Sunday and lay there until midnight, then began the descent. We did not see many things of interest on the return journey, and finally in good time reached Ogdensburgh, and who should be there but Uncle William and one of his sons. He had purchased a small boat and was engaged in traffic on the St. Lawrence, and was going home in the morning and we were to go with him.

We were all excitement that night and could not sleep, and were ready in the morning when his boat came alongside to get on board, and the last few miles of the toilsome journey began.

We were charmed with this part of the journey, for it was on a part of the beautiful river we had known all our lives. The water looked so limpid and rippled, and murmured a song as though welcoming us home, and old Missouri seemed a mud stream as we looked over the side of the boat, and into the cool depths, and on the placid surface of the mighty river.

We went through the Lachine rapids, and as we rose and fell on the swell of the waters we thought the St. Lawrence the finest stream in all the world. But more glad were we to shoot the rapids "De Plaw," and round the island, and there was the dear village

we had known always lying so quiet and peaceful waiting with outstretched arms to receive us.

Although our friends and neighbors knew we were coming they did not know what day we would arrive, and there was no one to meet us when we touched at the little wharf that night.

Puss ran on, and I in my feebleness tried to keep up but was too tired and sat down on the "big stone" to rest. The big stone was a very large one that had been by our fence all my life, and we used it as a play place. Mother soon came there too, leaning on father's arm, then she sank down, and the fountain of her tears was broken and she wept and we all wept together, relatives, who came running to meet us, friends and neighbors too.

Oh, what a home coming! we, who had started out such a short year before, all hope and anticipation of good fortune to come, had returned a broken remnant, and all our hopes shattered, and what property we had had in money and goods all gone entirely, nothing left but the house and there it stood right beside us empty waiting for us to enter and occupy, the family having moved when they knew we were to return.

Some one secured a stove and set it up, and our baggage was brought in and once more we were in the dear old home. But, oh, how changed; the furnishings were all gone and the dear children were not all there, and the eldest son, on whom mother had depended, would never return, and everything was changed.

Mother wept now all the time, but we felt better to see her weep.

The neighbor whose lot joined ours, and whose family were all boys, had had a heart trial too that summer. Her two eldest sons joined a military band and went to Montreal on an excursion to play, and while there were exposed to smallpox, and in a few weeks were both dead. And the lady who had been so exclusive before came to mother now and fell on her neck and mingled her tears with those that flowed from mother's eyes now all the time.

We were all sick and had ague, some one of us nearly all the time, and we had medicine enough to start a small apothecary shop, but the ague did not leave us and we had it off and on for two years.

When aunt heard that we had returned she came immediately to mother. I think I must have been her favorite for she always wanted me to live with her and now she was determined to take me home. I, of course, not wanting to go at all. I was very ill and had neuralgia in my face at the time of her coming and could scarcely sit up, besides having ague every few days and my system was weakened from effects of cholera. But she insisted and mother thought I had better go. Uncle and his two sons were at home, and aunt had two children, the youngest just the age of my sister's child, and I thought the living one would in a measure take the place of the dead one. And aunt kept a girl to do the work and there would be nothing to do but rest and get well. So I was over persuaded, and the next day was on the stage going home

with her. It was only eleven miles straight across the country to her house, but she had no horse and had come by stage and train. The first stage was seven miles, and there was a lady in who had had a cancer removed, and she took up the whole time telling about the operation and her wonderful recovery. I sat and watched her during the recital and wondered how any one could make such a long story out of one trouble. It seemed a small thing to me at that time.

We went the eight miles by train, then sat in the depot waiting for the next stage, and the agent came in to book us. He stood and looked at me—and such a woe begone-looking little girl I was—my face tied up in flannels and all covered with a white napkin, and he passed on and did not try to collect fare from me.

When we arrived at aunt's house, the handsome young man, now a law student, came running out to meet us, and he kissed my aunt, then stooped and kissed me for the first and last time.

Everything seemed quite natural. My uncle kind and genial as of yore. I was in bed a few days, then began to get better.

One day, not more than ten days after my arrival, aunt had company, and the girl had been told to build the kitchen fire and get the tea. When the fire was lighted she came to me and said "You will have to build the fire to-morrow evening." I looked at her in astonishment and asked what she meant. Then she told me that after the tea things were put away she was to go. I was better and could help with the

work. I was discouraged and knew I could never do much work and get well. But that night she went and I began work next morning just as I had done before, only I was older and more was expected of me.

My hands cramped when put in water too hot or cold, and I had all the dishes to do and vegetables to get ready, sweeping and dusting to do and the small things to iron, and then between times she set me to knitting and my hands cramped and I was disheartened. Then she thought of another scheme to make me earn my bread and butter. She had been sewing carpet rags for years, or I had for her, and now she decided to get that carpet ready and have it woven. In that day the warp was not purchased prepared and it had to be doubled and twisted at home. So she bought the fine cotton thread and set me to doubling and twisting. First I wound it into balls then put the balls in water, just a little in two pans on the floor to moisten the thread and make it twist good, then get out the big wheel and walk backward and forward by the hour. Of course my hands cramped and I would have ague every few days, but my aunt was inexorable, double and twist I must. Sometimes she would put the children to bed in the evening, and the young men would be gone, and she and uncle would go out to visit some friend and leave me to double and twist. I would walk backward and forward, my body casting such queer shadows on the wall, and I had heard so many ghost stories in my day, and the big wheel would buzz so loudly that finally I would get frightened and set it away and creep into

bed with the children, and listen and tremble until she would return.

It was during my stay, this last time, that I had cause to remember the young man aunt disliked. He stayed at home nearly all the time during the day, and finally she scolded him and asked him why he did not get to work instead of sitting there doing nothing, and living off his father, and he replied, " I am sitting here to see that you do not work Patty to death." I had never thought that he cared. The handsome young man would sit there behind a book and never look at me, and I surely think if aunt had worked me to death he would never have known it.

I went to school one day and was sent home with ague and that ended it.

Christmas came and the church gave a tree, and we all took a part in giving and receiving. My aunt gave me, among other things, a black felt hat trimmed with blue ribbons, and I liked it. It was the prettiest hat I had ever had. I think I wore it once.

After New Year's father and mother went there to visit for a couple of weeks and sent me home to stay with Puss and Seth. When the visit was over aunt came with them to take me back, but I would not go. I had had enough of living with her. And she to spite me took away from me all the things she had given me, the pretty hat and all. I did not care for hats; I would not go back.

Mother had lost her convincing way and said if I did not want to go I need not. So I never went back.

I met this aunt in after years when I was occupying

an honored position, and had succeeded in carving out something of a name for myself and she said, if I had remained with her and attended school I could have been quite a clever woman. I had the grace to say no word in return, but thought, yes, I should have known all the hard work anyone needed to become a thorough drudge.

CHAPTER XXIII

CLOSING SCENES

It is with a good deal of reluctance that I approach this last chapter of my narrative, for it was by far the happiest period of my life, and when I close it will feel that I have parted with much that can never be wholly my own again. But if my experience can be of any help to others they are welcome to share with me.

We were all home the rest of that winter, and our family seemed so small now; the two little children, Seth, Puss and I completed the number.

Mother's health was so broken she lay day after day on a bed in her old room, and seemed to take very little interest in things around her. Seth and Puss went to school and I lay on a lounge by the kitchen fire resting and trying to get well. Occasionally a day would come when ague would rack my frame, then father would hold my head and care for me through the fever, and when I was better fix me something nice to eat.

The wife of the Scotch tailor would come in with her work and sit by our fire and talk to father. Mother on her bed, and I on my lounge patient listeners. Father told all the life in the south, and when that was worn out he told of the war. Every hardship he told

seemed real to me. I had seen the south and knew its peculiarity too. I had seen enough of it in my brief sojourn of one year to last a lifetime. But we had treasures there, and one spot under that southern sun was sacred to us, for our loved ones were sleeping just as sweetly there as they could have done under northern skies. And while life should last we would yearn with intense longing over one little spot in that far-off distant clime.

Every one was kind. Mother had completely lost her old domineering way, and if we could live and get strong she did not care what we did to make noise and litter. We had suffered so much that everyone was full of sympathy for us, and came to see and bring us things to tempt our appetite, and altogether we found that there was a great heart of love in the bosom of the world.

We had two new members in our family not many months after our return, and they deserve special notice. Two years before a woman had come to our house just at night, and asked mother to keep her till morning. Mother kept her, and she did not go away the next morning, nor for many months after. For the next morning there were two souls, that had come to stay, instead of one, and she could not get away. She was a Canadian girl who had no parents, but had been bound to service when a mere child, and had worked always and knew every kind of work that was done on the Dutch farms and in the Dutch kitchens such as she had been brought up in. She was a little woman, and when she recovered her health she would

roll up her sleeves and fly around and scrub, wash, cook, iron, bake, scour and burnish, and when it was done everything was as shining and bright as hands could make them. When we went to Missouri she would gladly have gone, only she did not have the money for the journey and we could not afford to pay for her and did not need her service any way. She found a home for herself and child on a farm several miles from the village, and was doing as well as a woman can who has suffered in youth as she had done. But now when she heard that we had returned she came and offered her services to mother, who had rendered her the greatest service one woman can render another. Her child was now two years old, a bright, rosy-cheeked boy. We were happy to have her, and she was with us the whole year and took no pay other than the food she and her child ate. Our work was never done better, and all we had to do after she came was to rest and get well.

When spring put in his appearance I grew stronger, and began to walk out a good deal and when school opened was to go, and when the time came there was Peter Richmond in the master's place, and for one brief summer I was to go to school and feel a rest in going.

Schools have changed so much since my young day, and children of to-day can scarcely appreciate their privileges, and waste much precious time in teasing and annoying their teachers. In my young day the teacher had the whole sway and the pupil did not dare say a word in return for any amount of abuse. Oc-

casionally some bold young man would retaliate, not often though.

As a small child, I had listened to the large girls in the grammar class conjugating verbs, and wondered why they would say to such men as Dondle and Lyons I love, you love, he loves, not knowing of course what it all meant. But it seemed so different now to hear these large girls reciting to Peter Richmond, he looking like a young Apollo and they repeating, I love, you love, he loves. In after years I was to know what it all meant, but not then.

During that summer I got a taste for knowledge that was to lead me into the way of getting some education, where such a thing as education was but little known and not at all appreciated.

Early in the summer father went west to hunt up the man whom we had met on the boat, and to explore the land flowing with milk and honey he had told us of. Our experience had been such that father decided to go himself and see, and if things were as represented, in the autumn he would return for us. He took Seth with him, but in a short time he returned and advised mother to never go there, saying the country might be healthy, but the whole county where father had secured land was not worth our old home. But Seth was only a boy, and his council was not heeded. What did a boy know about such matters? In that day no one ever thought of taking advice from a boy. Men and women planned and executed, and children obeyed. Things are reversed nowadays, and children have a voice in domestic affairs too.

So we had Seth home all that summer, and father stayed in the new country and worked at his trade, that of cooper.

Everything seemed so nice to me that summer, for we could do anything we wanted to. If we got well and strong mother did not care. I could go to any church I pleased, and so I went to the Episcopal, and sat in the sacred precincts of that edifice a devout worshiper. I had been from church so long I could appreciate the privilege of sitting there so peaceful and quiet, and everything seemed so restful to me. The light falling softly on us from the stained windows, the notes of the organ, the responsive reading and after it the sermon, then the Sunday school, all left such an impression on my mind that in after years it was to help lead me into a higher life.

I went to the little grave yard Sunday afternoons in company with others, not daring to go alone, and walked around among the graves and read the inscriptions on the stones. I was more interested in such places now, and thought of the dear children lying in Greenwood cemetery in far-off Missouri, and not a stone to mark their last resting place. But God has a record, and they cannot be lost, was a comforting thought to me. Sometimes we strolled to the island and wandered over the beautifully kept grounds, or sat on the bank and watched the steamers shoot the rapids, and sometimes Seth would take us to Canada for a day, on Saturday, or row us down to some island and there spend some happy hours. We got more books to read that summer than we had ever had before,

and I would lie on the bed and read to my heart's content.

Seth was up to his old tricks too. I remember how the little children were sitting on the floor, looking at some old Harpers' Weeklies filled with war scenes, and they were very happy in trying to solve the why and wherefore of the pictures, when the hall door opened and the most terrible creature they had ever seen poked its head out of the door and looked at them. We heard them screaming and ran to their relief, and found that Seth had got possession of a false face, and seeing them there alone thought to frighten them just a little. But they were frightened more than a little, and it took our united efforts to quiet them. They would not touch the mask, and screamed every time we tried to get them to examine it. Of course this was long ago, and children were not used to seeing all kinds of things as they are now.

How cool and sweet the air seemed to us after the fierce heat of the south, and we would play on the grass in front of our house till long after dark. We had plenty of companions, children then, as now, enjoyed playing out of doors on a summer's evening.

We sought out new haunts and went over all the old ones, and enjoyed everything, for there was no fear of coming home and being whipped now. No child had been whipped in our family since the awful calamity had come which swept off so many, and mother now only wished to see us well and happy.

Granny Pidgeon came one day and told mother's

fortune, and I heard her tell mother that there would be another child in our family some day, and that it would be a boy, and that father was not two days' journey from home. We knew he was a week's journey from home, and thought Granny did not know, but the very next day he came, and that part of the fortune came true. He was very enthusiastic over the new country he had found, and would sit and tell us of all we could have and do when we got there. We were to have maple sugar in cakes, and some would be kept soft so we could spread it on our bread, and we were so fond of maple sugar that it was a great inducement to us, and we could gather nuts too, for there were many trees. In fact we could do anything we pleased when we got there.

Poor father; his was a hopeful nature and was doomed to bitter disappointment, as all or many hopeful natures are. It is a comfort to my heart to remember him as a cheerful, hopeful man, and while many other hopes fell to the ground, his last hope, the hope of eternal life, was like a strong anchor to his soul, and I know that never failed him; and when he closed his eyes on earthly things forever, he opened them on a beautiful vision of never-fading beauty where the sunlight of God's face can never grow dim.

We began our preparations to go. First father and mother decided to leave Puss. She was nearly fifteen years old, and it was necessary for her to be in school for some time to come, and so they decided to send her to father's sister for two years at least, and then she

could go west, too. Second, the old home was to be sold, and the money used toward building up a new home in the west.

Mother's brother and friends advised her to not sell the place, but stay where they were and then the children could get some schooling at least, for father said the country where we were going was new and the school had not come. But mother instead of listening to advice found a purchaser and sold the dear old home, and kept on preparing things for the journey.

One morning Puss and I lay awake in the parlor bedroom talking over the separation which was coming to us so soon, and we heard the wailing of an infant, and we wondered whose it could be. But as the crying continued we got up, dressed as quickly as possible and going to the door of mother's room, found that another thing in Granny Pidgeon's fortune telling had come true, for there was the child and a boy too. He is living still, the only son left in our family, and quite a man, having been born in 1867, a little more than a year after the loss of the dear ones in old Missouri. And now as soon as mother was strong enough to travel we were to go.

We did not feel so enthusiastic over this trip, for we were to retrace our steps, and had been over the route twice already, and thought very little of the journey.

We were sorry to leave the dear old home forever; for from past experience we had begun to realize that now that the old home was gone, there would be nothing to return to, and we probably would never see it again, and we never have.

So when the arrangements were all completed and mother was well enough to start, we packed our scant stock of goods and made the farewell visits to friends and relatives. We children had gone over the old haunts for the last time, and it was with a deep feeling of anxiety and dread that I was leaving the home of my childhood this time, for it was to a new country we were setting our faces, and who knew how things would be in our future, none but God. He held the key of our destiny. But we were too young to realize all that might mean. Years would unfold it though, and when we were older, we would know how much was lost out of our life by this our last move.

I sat in the dear church for the last time, and listened to its bell and thought of its cheery notes for years and years after where no church bell greeted my sense of hearing. I bade farewell to schoolmates and the dear master whose gentle influence had lifted me toward the higher life, little dreaming I would never be a scholar in a school again. But there was to be a way for me to receive some knowledge, even though schools were denied me. We visited the orchard for the last time and lingered in the shade of the trees laden with their burden of fruit, taking some of the choicest ones as a remembrance of joyful days spent and gone never to return to us. We had played in the orchard more than any other place, and it was years before we saw apples growing on trees again.

The garden gate clicked behind us, and we descended the path to the river and took the steamer one day late in September, and retraced our steps.

At Ogdensburgh Puss took the train for a distant part of the state, and our woman of all work, who had been with us thus far, bade us good-bye forever and returned to her child.

I do not know how it has been with her since, but the boy succeeded in getting an education, and the last I heard from him he was the leading druggist in his town.

While walking around Ogdensburgh we were accosted by a boy on a corner, who shouted to father and asked him who his tailor was. I had never noticed anything wrong with father's clothes, but my attention being drawn to it now, I looked at him and he was not dressed as other men were on the street. His coat was cut in the style called swallow-tail, and his trousers were fastened in front with a flap that buttoned on to the waistband, a style fashionable a century ago. He was accustomed to that style in his youth, and never changed. Fashions had no place in his life, and he clung to the old, not caring for the new. It was just as well. Where he is now the cut of a man's coat counts for nothing.

A week later we touched at a dock where the Northern Transportation steamers stopped to wood, and were told that our journey was at an end and we accordingly disembarked. This was the same place where the man had left the boat a year before at G. H.

I can look back now and see mother sitting on that dock on an old red chest brought from our lintern, she holding her infant in her arms and weeping bit-

terly. But why did she weep? I will paint the picture which presented itself if I can.

The dock extended out into Lake Michigan, and far away over the water could be seen two islands, so far away that on a foggy day they were invisible. The water was placid and blue, but the wind could lash it into a fury any time when it started on its mad pranks. Away to the south could be seen a mountain of sand which had been accumulating for centuries, and it had buried and completely hidden from view some of the monarchs of the primeval forest, and at intervals the tops of others could be seen still showing through the drifting sand. In the foreground a dreary waste of this same shifting sand, washed by the waves until it was bleached to a perfect state of purity. There was no town, no bustle of life, nothing but silence and solitude, and for a background the primeval forest stretching away over those eastern hills, and for miles and miles it formed an almost unbroken wilderness, and our home was to be there, twenty-five miles away back from even this dreary waste of sand, where a touch of life was brought occasionally by the steamer coming in to load, and before my star of hope sinks behind those distant eastern hills, and while the tears are still wet on mother's cheeks, cheeks that have known the bitterest tears, I will kindly draw the curtain and bid you a cheerful, tender farewell, for we have reached the golden land of promise, the land flowing with milk and honey. So farewell.

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